MARTIN MARTY on the evangelical mind

COMMONWEAL

$2.00 FALL BOOKS November 4, 1994

CHRISTOPHER F. KOLLER: Health-care autopsy

DESMOND O'GRADY: Dostoevsky lives

EDWARD McGLYNN GAFFNEY, Jr. on Ireland

Screen: RICHARD ALLEVA on 'Shawshank' & 'Blue Skies'

Media: FRANK McCONNELL endorses 'Law & Order'

Celebrating ANNE PORTER

THE FICTION OF CORMAC McCARTHY
Edwin T. Arnold

TIMOTHY A. BYRNES on Kevin Phillips

PAUL ELIE on Maura O'Halloran

DAVID TOOLAN discovers a brilliant first novel

EDWARD T. WHEELER on the art of biography

MADELINE MARGET on Jill Ker Conway

**********3-DIGIT 458
CW 00079972 9422
ST CHARLES LIBRARY
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
2860 US ROUTE 127
CARTHAGENA OH 45822-9591

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Carlin stood me up

Reston, Va.

To the Editors: I don't make a habit of reading magazine articles while standing up. But today, as I was leaving the house to shop, I noticed the article by David Carlin ["The Withering of the Working Class"] in your issue of October 7, and immediately starting reading. I just couldn't put it down. Still standing, I read all four pages to the end. Later I reread it, sitting down, just to make sure my first impressions were right, and they were.

Despite all the rhetoric about freedom of speech and of the press in the United States, certain subjects are taboo, and one of them is the deleterious effects of the class structure on American society. Congratulations to Carlin for an excellent analysis, and to *Commonweal* for printing it.

I hope Carlin continues writing about the evils resulting from the power of class bias. An example is the concerted political and media campaign to blame the most vulnerable among us for many of society's problems, illustrated by the one-sided attack on "welfare" for the poor while ignoring (concealing?) the many more costly programs by which governments at all levels shower the rich with bountiful welfare (taxpayer subsidized benefits, monetary and nonmonetary, not earned by work).

ROBERT A. SENSER

The writer served as a labor attaché with the United States Foreign Service. Now retired, he writes on human rights and related issues for a number of publications, including Commonweal.

Pessimism beats lying

Broad Brook, Conn.

To the Editors: I was cheered by David Carlin's deeply pessimistic article because I finally heard some truth-telling. If there is a way out of this economic horror story, I haven't heard it yet. But lying and fairy tales aren't going to help. Technology—so robots can absorb more jobs? Education—for jobs that don't exist? The only solution I can envision is that Carlin's "C-1s" will finally realize that "C-2s" who do not earn a living wage, do not buy cars, and a shrinking market producing a shrinking dividend will result in a mass conversion of "C-1s" into decent human beings.

MARY T. BERGAN

Workers unrecognized

Libertyville, Ill.

To the Editors: David Carlin's article made many salient points. Our president describes most Americans as "middle class." Not so, as Mr. Carlin tells us. The working class in this country needs recognition and leadership; our major political parties are providing neither.

JOHN P. FLOENER

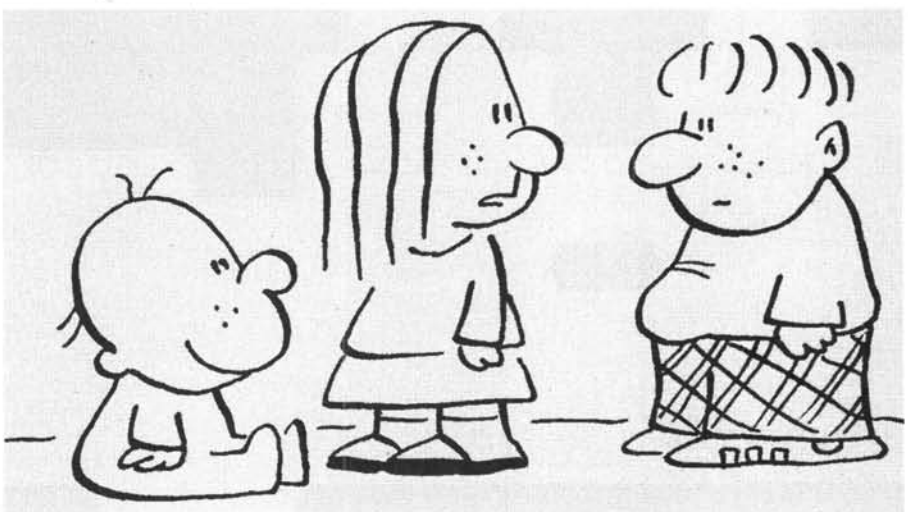
Who's stupid now?

Richlands, Va.

To the Editors: Who got it right? *Commonweal*'s editorial in the issue of September 23 asserts that the economy leaves much to be desired. Many Americans are worse off even if there are more jobs. At least some of President Bill Clinton's troubles could be tied to this failure to set the economy right. On the other hand, David Carlin in his column says the president's troubles stem from failing to see that "it's the culture, stupid." Carlin assumes that Clinton got the economy straightened out.

Which is it? Or is it in fact an either/or proposition? Maybe Clinton has failed to create a more just economy while also antagonizing people on all sides of various cultural issues.

(Continued on page 42)



"Oh, he can say a few words, but he's not what you'd call a reliable spokesman."

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. *Commonweal* articles also are available at many libraries and research facilities on CD-ROM and in electronic data bases. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional offices. Copyright © 1994 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $2. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $39; Canada, $41; foreign, $44. Special two-year rate: U.S. $67; Canada, $71; foreign, $77. Surcharge for air mail delivery to Europe, North Africa, Central or South America, $35 per year; for other parts of the world, $44 per year. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover, Antonucci; pp. 2, 5, 22, Baloo, Rothco; p. 8, Punch, Rothco; pp. 10, 20, 26, 28, Ross, Rothco; p. 14, © Marion Ettlinger, courtesy Knopf; p. 18, Cliff Lipson, courtesy Orion Pictures; pp. 32, 46, Valerry; p. 34, Gerard, Rothco; p. 36, Schwadron, Rothco; p. 38, Charlot.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMONWEAL

CONTENTS

Volume CXXI, Number 19

Correspondence:	2
Editorial:	3
Anne Porter: *Rosemary Deen*	4
A coroner's report: *Christopher F. Koller*	4
Dostoevsky lives: *Desmond O'Grady*	6
One troubled family: *Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.*	8
The child comes first: *Abigail McCarthy*	9
Blood & grace: *Edwin T. Arnold*	11
Poetry: *Anne Porter*	15
Screen: *Richard Alleva*	16
Media: *Frank McConnell*	19
A shot across the brow: *Martin E. Marty*	22

BOOKS

Arrogant Capital, by KevinPhillips/ Demosclerosis, by Jonathan Rauch: *Timothy A. Byrnes*	26
Vinegar Hill, by A. Manette Ansay: *David Toolan*	28
Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind, by Maura O'Halloran: *Paul Elie*	26
Dr. Johnson and Mr. Savage, by Richard Holmes: *Edward T. Wheeler*	32
True North, by Jill Ker Conway: *Madeline Marget*	34
Dictatorship of Virtue, by Richard Bernstein: *Robert F. Worth*	36
Religious booknotes: *Lawrence S. Cunningham*	37
Cinéma-vérité: *Mark Morelli*	46

STAFF

Editor: Margaret O'Brien Steinfels
Managing Editor: Patrick Jordan
Associate Editor: Paul Baumann
Production Editor: Jacqueline Dowdell
Senior Writer: Robert G. Hoyt
Business Manager: Richard Haas
Poetry: Rosemary Deen
Design: Emil Antonucci
Columnists: John Garvey, J. Bryan Hehir, Abigail McCarthy, David R. Carlin, Jr., Sidney Callahan, Liz Leibold McCloskey, Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.
Staff: Harriette Balsky, Carmen P. Alava, Sandra Smith
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly except Christmas/New Year's; and monthly July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 15 Dutch St., New York, N.Y. 10038. Telephone: (212) 732-0800. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, Me. 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 15 Dutch St. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 15 Dutch St. New York, N.Y. 10038.

At home with sex

Sexual revolutions, like thin or wide ties, baseball strikes, and popes, come and go. E.B. White wrote of the sexually tumultuous 1920s that "the literature of the period blossomed with deep and lugubrious books on sex and marriage" and that the "heavy writers had got sex down and were breaking its arm." Sound familiar? In an inspired effort to help sex "retain its high spirits," White and James Thurber wrote *Is Sex Necessary?*, a spoof of the attempt to articulate the inexpressible, or what they called "the strange bewilderment which overtakes one person on account of another person."

In the wake of the endlessly trumpeted sexual revolution of the 1960s—and especially after the advent of the birth control pill and legalized abortion—a lot more ink has been spilled in either celebrating or denouncing the presumed demise of "traditional" sexual morality. Advocates of "liberation" embraced a kind of *laissez-faire* attitude regarding the most socially volatile of human relations. The damage done by sexual repression was what needed to be combated. Sex education, not sexual morality, was the "rational" or "enlightened" approach to sexual responsibility. Where religion and custom had long channeled the sexual instinct toward marriage, the helping professions rushed in to defend individual rights. The results have been decidedly mixed. A recent *Atlantic Monthly* (October) essay by Barbara Dafoe Whitehead on "The Failure of Sex Education," exposed the fallacy behind these innovations: Sexual responsibility principally depends on motivation not information; on normative expectations, not on therapeutic understanding.

Those opposed to the loosening of sexual morality practice a hyperbole of their own. They have protested what seemed to be society's capitulation to a permissive sexual ethic, warning that cultural ruin follows inexorably on the heels of such sexual indulgence. In Catholic circles the phrase "the contraceptive mentality" has blossomed, and is being used in frankly promiscuous ways to link the use of artificial contraception to everything from adultery to consumerism to violence against women and (rather illogically) to the increase in children born out of wedlock and the number of abortions.

In short, both sides of this controversy have once again endeavored to take the "high spirits" and much of the common sense out of sex. So it was with something close to a continental sigh of relief that the nation greeted the release last month of a University of Chicago (NORC) survey that found Americans remain essentially monogamous (75 percent of men and 85 percent of women), remarkably "satisfied" (almost half say "extremely pleased and satisfied"), and relatively energetic (40 percent of married couples have sex twice a week). Married Catholics, it turns out, have the highest frequency of conjugal contact. No wonder Catholic reading is on the decline!

Several conclusions are suggested by the study's results. First, as most married

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Catholic couples know, contraception is not the first step on the road to marital breakdown and social chaos but often the opposite. Second, it seems that Americans by and large still link the idea of romance with the vocation of marriage. Home continues to be where the heart as well as where the sex is.

"Love is not blind;" G.K. Chesterton wrote, "that is the last thing it is. Love is bound; and the more it is bound the less it is blind." What is so often lugubrious about the public conversation about sex and marriage is how little we seem to hear about the psychological and moral realism that has traditionally wed fidelity to sexual fulfillment. Happily, most Americans appear to have a thorough knowledge of that connection—perhaps the most basic of the facts of life. Sexual high spirits, it seems, have not been suppressed by either the false promise of permissiveness or the false asceticism underlying the church's rejection of contraception. Of course, it would be cavalier to be too sanguine about the drift of modern sexual morality. Sex continues to be exploited for economic and ideological reasons—and then there is always Original Sin. Still, it is reassuring to learn that "the strange bewilderment" White and Thurber celebrated remains as potent and as binding as ever.

Anne Porter: Different world, different words

In the winter of 1979 I saw my first Anne Porter poems, one of which we chose right away for the Christmas issue. Since then, I believe, most of her published poems have appeared in *Commonweal.* We have been lucky (*see,* page 15). Now two of her friends have arranged to have a selection of poems published: *An Altogether Different Language, Poems 1934–1994* (Zoland Books, $10.95, 128 pp.) and the book has been nominated for a National Book Award. Yes—if ever there was a national book for these sixty years.

It's a pleasure—and funny—to read the squibs and the superb introduction by David Shapiro and hear behind them the sigh of relief of blurb-writing friends and writers who this time don't have to equivocate or even puff. The honoring words are true.

For me the join of the very sophisticated and the very simple in the poems implies a world neither I nor anyone else has ever imagined. I keep reading the poems as they keep coming to my desk to know more, poem by poem, about this world. As I know more, I want the next poem, which shows the world's deepening shore, or an island interior before dawn, or maybe First Avenue, empty and gray on an early Sunday of a long-ago war. Someone walks with a small child past the locked-up shops, and they see "one window heaped with tarnished lamps/Guitars and radios and dusty furs/And there among them a pawned christening-dress/White as a waterfall."

ROSEMARY DEEN

HEALTH-CARE REFORM

A CORONER'S REPORT

MAYBE THERE'S A LIFE AFTER DEATH

"Who would you trust your health with—an M.B.A. or an M.D.?" asked an "educational" advertisement placed in numerous high-profile newspapers last summer by a physicians' organization. In the wake of the demise of federal health-care reform, this rhetorical query came back to haunt me in my work for a health maintenance organization.

I had helped develop a new fee schedule for the HMO, a compilation of 8,000 standardized procedures performed by physicians, each paired with what we would consider a reasonable fee (that is, low enough to save money, but not so low as to alienate participating physicians, with whom we contract to provide care to our members). As I pored over this mind-numbing construct, code by code, one procedure's description bludgeoned its way through my stupor: "Resuscitation of a Newborn" it was called. I paused. I could not decide which was more absurd, the system which forces a physician to codify, annotate, and then charge others for a compassionate, albeit technically sophisticated, response to a helpless individual in great need; or the notion of someone like me arbitrating a value for the act—$100? $10,000? $1,000,000? Try articulating the value of the procedure to the parents if the child lives. And if it doesn't? What if they had to pay for it themselves?

These are the situations and alternatives we settle for when the private sector gets stuck making public policy; when health care is relegated to a commodity, best left to the market to allocate. This was the legacy of the 103rd Congress, and it is a poor substitute for what might yet be.

The etiologies of health-care reform's demise are as varied as those of the diseases (high costs and poor access) it was intended to cure. President Bill Clinton grossly underestimated the public's resistance to change, and aggravated it with a technocratic, complex plan drawn up in isolation from the many stake-holders.

Representatives of the *status quo*—such as the pharmaceutical, health insurance, medical equipment, and health-care provider industries—unfettered by campaign finance reform or anything so arcane as a sense of civility—threw mountains of invective and money at anything smacking of substantial change. Interests opposed to comprehensive reform donated $46 million for the period from January 1993 to July 1994. According to Citizen Action, the effect was to cow congressional members and confuse the public, reducing everybody's appetite for new initiatives, especially those which ran counter to the endemic suspicion of "big government."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A highly partisan opposition, increasingly emboldened by polls showing wariness toward the Clinton plan, willingly adopted an obstructionist stance. While positing little in the way of credible alternatives, Republican Senate minority leader Robert Dole and House minority whip Newt Gingrich et al played a stall game, counting on a more Republican Congress in 1995 to deliver moderate reforms for which they could take credit.

Finally, those most likely to be favorably affected by reform—those with poor access to health care—were not heard. The adage held true: the poor do not vote; and even the ones that do don't contribute to congressional campaigns. They certainly do not coordinate assaults on their representatives' offices with fax machines, as do the masters of single-interest pressure politics, lobbyists who wield disproportionate influence on Capitol Hill.

But Congress has only postponed action on health-care reform, not buried it. The need for fundamental restructuring will grow stronger.

The private sector, in which we have placed our fealty, will address only the cost problems in U.S. health-care financing and delivery, and with limited success. In the future, absent major regulatory interventions, managed care will grow in strength. Networks of hospitals, physicians, and other providers will contract with insurance companies to provide and help "manage" care for employers. These companies' employees will accept limited provider choices and some treatment review for more comprehensive coverage and lower costs than traditional fee-for-service indemnity plans. Competition between these alliances (does this sound familiar? It was the crux of the Clinton plan) will limit cost increases. MBAs, alas, will continue to thrive, but probably not conquer in such a world—reviewing fee schedules, negotiating contracts, and wringing out savings.

This system is already producing lower premium increases in highly competitive areas, with projections of zero to 4 percent annually in several Northeastern states. Physicians and hospitals are experiencing sea changes in their roles and responsibilities as a result of these realities; demand for generalist primary-care physicians is increasing at the expense of higher-priced specialists. Moreover, with proper oversight, the quality of care provided will not suffer appreciably compared to old-fashioned fee-for-service medicine.

Such a world of managed care and private-sector resource allocation, however, is powerless against larger forces which drive much of our health-care needs and expenses. An aging population will require more resources. Health-care consumption will continue to be supply-driven, fueled by a ceaseless array of diagnostic, treatment, and pharmaceutical options. Many parts of the country will not have sufficiently large populations to support a competitive market. Finally, the public continues to vacillate between its wishes for a controlled, nonintervential end of life, and a steadfast refusal to accept anything resembling an untimely end. (Willard Gaylin, the physician and ethicist, maintains the only acceptable death in the eyes of many Americans is by heart attack at ninety years of age, in the arms of your lover, after beating your son in tennis.)

If the private sector has limited power to control costs, it feels no obligation to increase access to health care and will probably exacerbate the problem. How admirable is the high quality health care this nation boasts of if one in six people cannot obtain it? The number of uninsured in the United States, as estimated by the Census Bureau, now stands at 39.7 million, or 15.3 percent of the population. This 4 percent increase over last year comes in a period of economic growth. A significant proportion of those without insurance live above the poverty line.

Any cost improvements accomplished by HMOs will produce more uninsured Americans. Families who have members with pre-exisiting medical conditions, members of small, hard-to-administer groups, and employees of businesses electing to reduce or drop coverage face greater risk of being shoved out of private-sector health care lest they reduce efficiency.

Despite this gloomy forecast, incremental reform will be the watchwords for any effort by the next Congress. Chastened by the Clintons' failure and the brute force exercised this year by stake-holders in the current system, political leaders will look for ways to tinker with insurance reforms and, as they tend to say: Why fix what is not broken? The larger political context will make reform difficult as well. The absence of campaign finance reform makes the practice of single-interest politics devastatingly easy. Equity is not a growth concept in the United States (the number of people living below the poverty line is at a thirty-year high, and income discrepancies continue to grow). A public wary of the federal government's ability to do anything but collect taxes and incur debt will look skeptically at any program to redistribute income and assure government services, Medicare, Social Security, and the Veterans Administration notwithstanding.

Finally, states, feeling the financial burden of the uninsured, will continue to shape pay policies. The most aggressive will attempt to expand Medicaid access, as Oregon and Tennessee have, to include uninsured populations. These efforts will continue to be constrained by revenue limitations, the fear of provoking employers or industries to leave a region because of new tax burdens, and federal statutes such as ERISA (the employ-

"Your test results are back, Mr. Waverly, and you're either a very sick man or a penguin."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ee benefits funding regulations) limiting the states' power over large employers. Single-payer advocates have focused their efforts at the state level. State-appointed commissions in Vermont and Montana dutifully included evaluations of single-payer plans in their recommendations to their state legislatures; neither considered it politically feasible. The most significant potential impact for single-payer advocates will be in California, where Proposition 186, a comprehensive single-payer initiative, will be included on the November 8 ballot. The proposition has generated strong praise from some corners for its guarantees of access, but criticism from others for its administrative complexities, state bureaucracy, and vaguely defined benefit package, which may or may not include abortion.

At best, the result of these state initiatives will be a patchwork of efforts to increase access, resulting in the oft-quoted health economist Uwe Reinhardt's prediction of a three-tiered United States health-care system: fee-for-service practice with unlimited choice for the wealthy few, managed care for many, and an underfunded, largely segregated public system for the rest.

Is our federal government up to the task of health-care reform? The unequal distribution of health-care resources in the United States is a fundamental injustice. No child should go without immunizations; no adult should forgo necessary antibiotic therapy. The issue of unequal access can only be addressed at the federal level, where resources exist to redistribute funds and define national standards of equity (for example, Medicare's standard benefits package) for citizens. Incremental strategies need not be anathema; basic coverage for children and expectant mothers seems an obvious place to start.

Ironically, prospects for reform may increase as time drags on; the nonvoting poor will be joined by newly uninsured and underinsured, disenfranchised members of the middle class. In the meantime, it is not entirely clear where leadership will arise on this issue. The events of the past year indicate, however, that it is too important to leave solely in the hands of congressional members, M.D.s, or M.B.A.s. CHRISTOPHER F. KOLLER

Christopher F. Koller lives in Buffalo, New York, where he works for a health-maintenance organization.

REPORT FROM SAINT PETERSBURG

DOSTOEVSKY LIVES

APOSTLE OF INTERIOR FREEDOM

The tea in Dostoevsky's glass is still brewed daily, as if it had to sustain him through a strenuous night of writing. Even the doorbell is unchanged since the time Dostoevsky would slowly climb the steep stairs to his second-floor apartment in Saint Petersburg, pausing for breath because of lung trouble. In the same street as the ocher-colored, four-story apartment block are the city's largest market and the Orthodox church he attended, reopened only in 1991 after being closed for decades.

In the apartment, the clock is stopped at 8:38 A.M., the moment on a January day in 1881 when Fyodor Dostoevsky died from a throat hemorrhage caused by emphysema. In Saint Petersburg, though, there is proof that Dostoevsky lives on, and not only in libraries and bookshops but also in people who were led to Christianity by his writings during the Communist regime.

These converts are of interestingly varied backgrounds. Sergei Grib, an astrophysicist of the Academy of Science, found in Dostoevsky an effective counter to his conventional atheistic secondary education. Benjamin Novick, now vice-rector of the Orthodox Theological Academy, was once a computer specialist; at the age of thirty-five, he began reading his way into Christianity, and, eventually, the priesthood; Dostoevsky played a key role in this evolution. At seventeen, Vladimir Poresch, brought up in an atheistic household, thought of religion as a compensation for fear of the forces of nature, believed life itself was senseless, and was tempted to suicide. Reading Dostoevsky, and meeting Christians, convinced him of the truth of Christianity; he was baptized at age twenty-five, joined a Christian study group, which brought him imprisonment. In 1993 he became director of an Orthodox-linked human rights organization in Saint Petersburg.

Of his fifty-three years, Dostoevsky lived almost thirty in Saint Petersburg, the last three in this second-floor apartment, which has been restored in keeping with photographs taken immediately after his death, along with descriptions in the memoirs of his widow, Anna. (He'd also lived there twenty-three years earlier, in 1846.) Much else in Saint Petersburg recalls Dostoevsky: the grubby, interconected courtyards of large apartment blocks, where *babushkas* (grandmothers) sit gossiping; the apartment at number 104 on Griboedova Canal where the fictional Raskolnikov (*Crime and Punishment*) committed his crime.

But local reminders of Dostoevsky are not the only or prime reasons why he still means so much to those he has influenced. Since his conversion Sergei Grib has written extensively on Russian religious philosophy; recently he founded a Christian studies association named for the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev. "Christianity means interior freedom," he said in an interview. "That was one of Dostoevsky's messages, and it counted a lot in an oppressive society." Grib's own academic career had suffered when his beliefs were discovered. "Moreover," he added, Dostoevsky "dramatized the corollary, that only a free man can be a Christian. Under Communism we desperately wanted to be freed. Dostoevsky also convinced us that each man has his own particular path to God: that life is a personal relationship with God."

There is, of course, much more in Dostoevsky's novels that resonated with his countrymen a century after he died, and his life under the czars included scarifying experiences of a kind well known to the subjects of Stalin and his successors. In 1849, already a literary success, he was arrested for his membership in a utopian socialist discussion group. With others,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he was imprisoned for eight months in Saint Petersburg's notorious Saints Peter and Paul fortress, and then condemned to death. Seconds before the firing squad was to carry out the sentence, a reprieve arrived from His Imperial Majesty Nicholas I. One of the other men condemned and then reprieved was taken from the scene insane, and never recovered. Dostoevsky recounted his experience in a letter to his younger brother Mikhail:

> They made us put on the white shirts worn by persons condemned to death. Thereupon we were bound in threes to stakes, to suffer execution. Being the third in the row, I concluded I had only a few minutes of life before me. I thought of you and your dear ones and I contrived to kiss Pletcheiev and Dourov, who were next to me, and to bid them farewell. Suddenly the troops beat a tattoo, we were unbound, brought back upon the scaffold, and informed that his Majesty had spared our lives.

The reprieve was not a pardon: Dostoevsky was banished to Siberia for four years of penal servitude and five of military service. Part of the time he was in chains and was subject to frequent attacks of epilepsy. After his return to Saint Petersburg in 1860 he fought a long and exhausting battle against poverty. In 1865 his first wife, Maria, their child, and his brother Mikhail died, and he himself had to flee abroad to escape debtor's prison. (It was in this troubled period that he wrote *Crime and Punishment*.) Not till 1873, when he became editor of a Saint Petersburg weekly, *The Citizen*, did he leave debts behind. By the time he moved to his last apartment, he was financially secure.

A gambler and a grumbler, Dostoevsky was no plaster saint—but, to judge from the kind of influence he still wields, he might be a real one. As a novelist, he created characters who live on the page, who know they are God's children but feel they are living in hell. He depicted nihilists memorably as well: one of his recurrent themes is that unless people believe in God they are capable of any abomination, for self-interest inevitably overrides good intentions. To judge by *The Brothers Karamazov*, he saw power as one of the ultimate temptations for Christians. It was, of course, a temptation for Communists as well and during their era Dostoevsky's exposure of the corruptions of power struck a chord. That made his work subversive but the novels were such classics that Soviet authorities kept them in print.

In that spacious apartment Dostoevsky wrestled with angels and demons to write *The Brothers Karamazov*, working from about 10:30 P.M. till 5 A.M., acting out all the dialogue to get the tone right, sipping tea, stubbing endless cigarettes into an empty sardine tin. On his desk he kept the work of his favorite poet, Pushkin. Above the desk is a reproduction of Raphael's *Sistine Madonna*. The room used by his devoted wife, Anna, is businesslike: it was she who looked after the budget, dealt with Dostoevsky's publisher, paid off the debts of her late brother-in-law Mikhail.

A handsome brown rocking horse stands in the room of the two children, Fyodor and Liuba. Each evening Dostoevsky would read to them from Pushkin's "Fairy Tales" or other books. Perhaps he had in mind his own words: "Some good, sacred memory preserved from childhood is perhaps the best education." He also helped his children with their lessons in history, Russian, and geography (there is a map of the world on the wall of the children's room). But at times he closed himself away in his study. Then they slipped notes under the door. One from Fyodor reads, "Daddy, give me a candy."

How he responded we do not know; he may have been too busy with *The Brothers Karamazov*. He completed only the first volume of what was to have been a trilogy, and had other works planned. But at 3 P.M. on January 28, 1881, the hemorrhage began. Doctors were called but could do nothing; the end came on the next morning. On the bottom of a tobacco box containing some cigarette cartridges, twelve-year-old Liuba wrote, "Daddy died today."

DESMOND O'GRADY

Desmond O'Grady is a reporter, essayist, and short-story writer who covers Vatican and Italian affairs for a number of publications.

COMING

Commonweal's 70th anniversary issue

November 18

2nd ANNUAL NOSTRA AETATE DIALOGUE

THE DEATH OF JESUS:
A Catholic-Jewish Dialogue
Two perspectives and a public discussion.

Presenters:
Rev. Raymond E. Brown,
Professor Emeritus
Union Theological Seminary

Rabbi Michael E. Cook
Professor, Hebrew Union College

Moderator:
Rabbi Burton Visotzky
Jewish Theological Seminary

Thursday, November 17, 1994 at 6 P.M.

Fordham University at Lincoln Center
Pope Auditorium,
Columbus Avenue at 60th Street, NYC
(212) 636-6300

ADMISSION IS FREE

Co-sponsor: The Jewish Community Center on the Upper West Side

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ONE TROUBLED FAMILY

TRYING TO OUTLIVE THE PAST

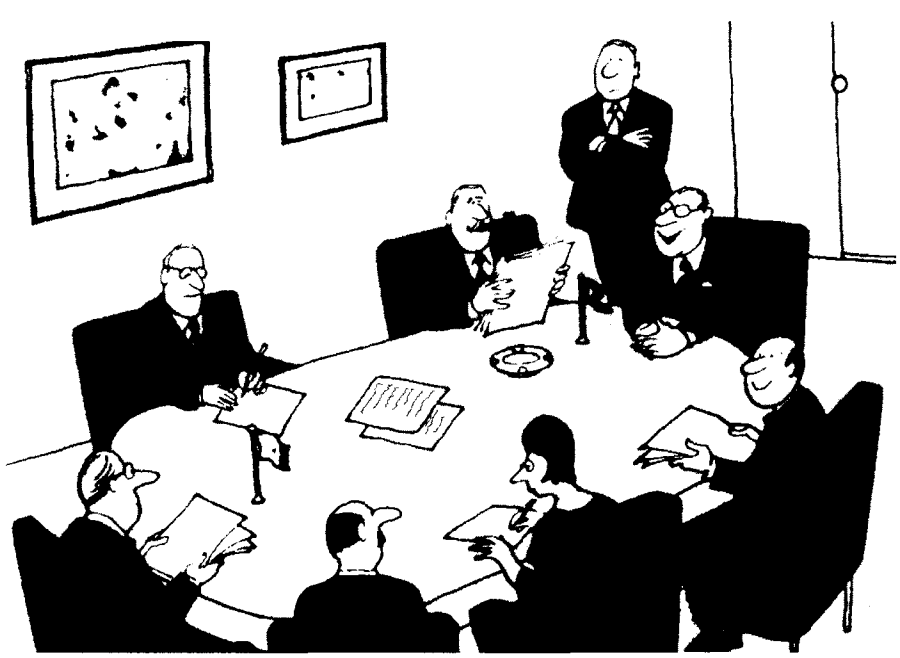
Against the bloody background of "the Troubles" that have been raging in Northern Ireland over the past quarter-century, the announcement last August of a unilateral and open-ended cessation of hostilities by the IRA was welcome news indeed. The more recent announcement of a permanent cease-fire by the Combined Loyalist Military Command, the umbrella organization that combines the Ulster Freedom Fighters and the Ulster Volunteer Force, is even more heartening.

Nationalists seeking the reunification of the six counties of Northern Ireland with the Republic may now be afforded a place at the conference table to discuss their political objectives, for they have—in the words of Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams—pledged their "firm intention to see the gun removed permanently from Irish politics." By spending time at the table with Nationalists and with representatives of the Irish Republic, Unionists now seeking to remain with the United Kingdom may receive sufficient assurances that their communal identity and all of their civil and political rights will be fully protected in any new arrangements for the future of Ireland. In the words of the statement accompanying the Unionist cease-fire, the people of Northern Ireland are "on the threshold of a new and exciting beginning, with our battles in the future being political battles.... Let us firmly resolve to respect our differing views of freedom, culture, and aspiration, and never again permit our political circumstances to degenerate into bloody warfare."

To apply John Hobbes's famous description of human nature to the Irish question, for the people of Northern Ireland, the past twenty-five years have been nasty and brutish, but not short. If anything has been very long for these people, it is the relentless memory of past injustices. Nationalists and Unionists alike nurture their different versions of centuries-old grievances, not to the expiation of their grief, but to the extension of their pain. The grief of Nationalists is never diminished, only exacerbated, by the constant drumbeat of the Orangemen each summer recalling the victory of their Dutch Protestant hero, William of Orange, over the last Catholic king of England, James II. And the anguish of a Unionist mother who has lost her only son in a senseless pub bombing cannot be justified by Nationalist recollections of colonial domination going back to Henry II or the other things on the too-long list of injuries inflicted over the centuries.

One of the ancient Irish Brehon laws limited recovery in the settlement of a debt. No creditor was allowed to take a debtor's book, sword, harp, or plow. Sad to say, this ancient custom was abrogated when the British monarchy extended its imperial rule in Ireland, and literally took away the book, the harp, the sword, and the plow from the conquered Irish. Deprived of their books, is it any wonder that some of the Irish nurtured one-sided oral memories of the past? And with the theft of their swords, is it any wonder that some of the natives eventually turned to the gun and the bomb? Left bereft of a sense of security in their own homes—folks on the Shankhill Road do not regard the occupying British Army as a peacekeeping force—these citizens of Northern Ireland saw little in their external reality to call into doubt the truth of the ancient myths about the foreign conqueror.

As long as the collective memories went unchallenged either by competing versions of the same story or by the radical breakthrough toward repudiation of violence of the last several months, was it any wonder that conflicted Irishmen inflicted brutish violence on one another over the past quarter-century? John Hume, chair of the Social Democratic and Labor party, noted recently that over half of the 3,106 who lost their lives in the past twenty years in Northern Ireland were ordinary civilians going about their business. As Hume rightly observed, "All of those peo-



"I'd say we're pretty close to an agreement. The only thing our side requires now is some assurance that you people won't fight back if we attack you."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ple who lost their lives were human beings. All of their families suffered the same sense of loss and grief. All are victims of our history and our failure to solve our problems."

Only now that the reality in Northern Ireland is beginning to change can the myths be reshaped. Still, now is not the moment for premature pronouncements of "peace in our time." As London and Dublin both know, the road to the conference table is still pocked with great potholes. Bosnia and Rwanda remind us of that every day. Even though the Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, was able to reach a new level of accord with British Prime Minister John Major in the historic Downing Street Declaration last December, Reynolds recently suggested that it may take another quarter-century before all the issues of Northern Ireland are finally resolved peacefully. But the stunning breakthroughs in Israel and South Africa also remind us of the possibility of success. At least the road ahead in Northern Ireland now has greater promise at its end than the previous standoff and slaughter. So neither is this a moment for failure of nerve to seize the precious opportunity that the cease-fire presents.

Those who are committed to the *status quo* of the appalling violence in Northern Ireland will now attempt to sabotage the peace before it has a chance to succeed, much in the style of the hawkish hardliners among Israelis and Palestinians who remain opposed to the peace process there. For example, Dr. Ian Paisley, chair of the Democratic Unionist party, responded to the IRA cease-fire, "I see no suggestion whatsoever of a permanent cessation of violence." There are none so blind as those who refuse to open their eyes. Rather than call upon his own followers to lay down their arms, Paisley forecast a full-scale civil war and accused Britain of having betrayed the Unionists by "selling out to the IRA" and "pandering to the government of the Irish Republic."

Such talk is a distraction from the urgent task of ending the conflict in a way that ensures it does not erupt again. Opponents of peace in Ireland can be counted on to rev up their old resentments and to point accusing fingers. But as they insist on rehashing old and unhelpful questions about who started what first and who replied with more excessive force, saner minds should repudiate their arrogant, smug commitment to continued mutual self-destruction.

The Irish are a profoundly dysfunctional family. That, at least, is the view of Ivor Browne, a distinguished Irish psychiatrist who nearly twenty years ago characterized the situation in the North with this metaphor. Last February, Dr. John Alderdice, a Belfast psychiatrist, son of a Presbyterian preacher, and the chair of the Alliance party—a smaller but calmer group of Unionists than Paisley's Democratic Unionist party—also employed this metaphor in his address at the Waldorf-Astoria Conference on Northern Ireland. Any metaphor for a sociopolitical reality as complicated as Northern Ireland may put too fine a gloss on the matter. That said, there is a point to the metaphor. For family therapy to succeed, all the parties in the sick family must be willing to engage one another honestly and at the deepest level of feelings that are often obscure or hidden, at least to one or another member of the family. Precisely because the process of the discovery and admission of these feelings is itself difficult, family therapy usually takes a while to be successful. The good news is that family problems are soluble not through the isolation of any one member of the family, but when all the members of the family are open to one another and have the courage to change behavior in a sincere, mutual quest for satisfactory solutions.

It is time for the people of Northern Ireland to begin this common quest to put an end to their troubles. However long it takes for all parties to drop their defenses and to learn genuine civility, we can all be grateful that most of the disputing parties have at least laid down their weapons to search for reconciliation. However long this healing process takes, we can all pray that the people of Northern Ireland will find that by confronting the pain of their past, they will at last be liberated to move confidently into the future together. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

THE CHILD COMES FIRST

WHEN FAMILIES CAN'T BE FIXED

Washington has been in a mild uproar since late September over a series of articles in the *Washington Post*. The result of four years of research by the highly regarded reporter Leon Dash, they chronicled the life of Rosa Lee Cunningham, a fifty-seven-year-old grandmother who has been convicted twelve times for shoplifting for which she has intermittently spent five years in jail. She has also been a prostitute and a drug pusher, is a drug addict, and is now HIV positive.

Rosa Lee, still a rather attractive woman if one can judge by news photos, has had eight children, five by different fathers. She never bothered with their schooling but she taught them and a number of her grandchildren, too, how to steal. All but two of her children followed her into drug dealing and drug addiction.

The purpose of the series, according to the *Post* and Dash himself, was to illuminate the life of the underclass that increasingly populates our cities but lives outside our main culture. Predictably, a storm of protest came from middle-class black citizens (Rosa Lee is African-American, as is Dash): Why portray the degradation of such a woman? Why not profile those hard-working and successful African-Americans who strengthen our communities? Others saw Rosa Lee as a victim, her life a result of racism and poverty. Still others, more thoughtful, saw the series as a call to action, to face up to the spread-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing infection of families like Rosa Lee's and to seek again to find solutions to the problem they present.

How can we deal with such an enormous and fast-growing problem? (In one lifetime Rosa Lee has brought into being three generations of petty criminals and social misfits.) There are ways.

Leon Dash in a subsequent article pointed out that two of Rosa Lee's children had turned out all right and were stable members of society. In both cases helpful adults had taken an interest in them and intervened in their lives—in one case, a teacher; in the other, a social worker. Apparently, too, the lack of such intervention in the lives of the other six was compounded by the fact that the educational system allowed them to become failures in the early and most crucial years of schooling.

As I write, Nelson Mandela and the Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams are visiting Washington, the former a triumphant example of the overcoming of a social pathology, the latter hoping to. This takes me back again to a column written by Barbara Reynolds of *USA Today* (May 13, 1994) at the time Mandela became official leader of what she called "Africa's rainbow nation." She contrasted the achievement of bringing democracy to South Africa—the result of a long struggle waged both within the country and abroad—to our national failure to cope with the desperate conditions in our own inner cities, especially in the District of Columbia, "the city the nation shares." Our leaders must refocus the struggle, she wrote, and suggested ways for that to be done.

We are years late in facing up to this problem. I agree with Reynolds. Let's start now. Government will be slow in doing so but churches and businesses can move more quickly. They can adopt the schools in which parents like Rosa Lee Cunningham have little interest or involvement and see that each and every pupil has the interest and help of a mentoring adult like her two successful children had. They can provide teachers' aides who will insure that no child is pushed on until he or she masters the basics of education and gains the self-confidence such mastery promotes. In fact, if we truly care, each of us could make ourselves part of that effort right now.

But the problem is not confined to the bringing up of asocial and neglected children by parents like Rosa Lee. The growing incidence of physical abuse by parents as well as the incidence of parents who provide no real care and love (a form of abuse) often produces emotionally stunted and murderous children.

According to Reynolds, a *USA Today* survey ranked our nation's capital as one of the deadliest places for children to live in the country. "In D.C. this year city officials estimate 2,500 kids will be abused," she writes. Reynolds proposes that orphanages should be built to protect children from abusive adults. As *Commonweal* readers know, this is a remedy that appeals to me. At the risk of being thought a Joanna-One-Note, I cite some of the arguments for orphanages of which I wrote some years ago ("The Least of These," December 1, 1989 and "Orphans Need Homes," January 26, 1990).

> The welfare system in most cities and states still addresses the problem of neglected and abandoned children on the basis of an outworn and probably never realistic thesis—that the problem of each child must be worked out according to a permanent plan which will result either in reunification with the biological family or adoption. The reality is that most of these children from the inner city are the offspring of the second- and third-generation of teen-aged mothers isolated from any extended family and living in extreme poverty. There are no real biological families or homes to which they may return ("The Least of These").

And yet a misguided, supposedly family oriented system *does* return them to these nonhomes willy-nilly. "Tommy's 'mommy-sores' from an electric cord beating took months to heal," wrote Sister Josephine, administrator of Saint Ann's Infant Home recently. "He asked why we were sending him back home when we knew what was going to happen to him. Why indeed? All I could say is, 'It's a court order.' It's nothing but slavery" (*Catholic Standard*, September 29).

Sister Josephine describes this slavery vividly. "They are beaten, burned, battered, sold, used, and abused—just as were the slaves of years ago." She challenges the belief of the present child welfare system that every family can be "fixed" and that a biological family is always the best place to raise a child. If we put the child's needs and best interests first, we must seek alternatives, certainly for abused children (and perhaps for the children of neglect, too) until, and if, the parents can be rehabilitated. Among the alternatives she lists are long-term group homes, another term for Barbara Reynold's orphanages. It is time we considered this alternative seriously. □

"I may be setting my sights too high, but I want to be a great American when I grow up."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BLOOD & GRACE

THE FICTION OF CORMAC McCARTHY

EDWIN T. ARNOLD

Cormac McCarthy's novels compose an extended journey. His characters travel the mountain roads and forests of east Tennessee, the city streets of Knoxville, the deserts and hills of Mexico and the Southwest. For the most part, their wanderings seem without immediate purpose, or purpose of the vaguest sort: an undefined desire to withdraw or to explore or to escape. They are descendants of Ishmael, both the biblical outcast and Melville's nomadic seagoer. I can think of no other author who so carefully charts his characters' movements from street to street or town to town—you can follow them on maps if you wish. And yet his novels usually cease their telling in the midst of journeys, still on the road, short of destination, for, in the world of McCarthy, the only true destination is death.

"He spoke as one who seemed to understand that death was the condition of existence and life but an emanation thereof." This is the author's description of a gypsy encountered by his protagonist Billy Parham in McCarthy's new novel, *The Crossing*, but it could apply equally well to McCarthy, who himself seems fascinated, at times even exhilarated, by the multiple manifestations of doom. In his novels, death is portrayed with astonishing variety in the constant violence men do to men. "Holme saw the blade wink in the light like a long cat's eye slant and malevolent and a dark smile erupted on the child's throat and went all broken down the front of it," reads a passage in *Outer Dark* (1968), and the effect causes some to throw the book to the floor. In *Child of God* (1973), death is amatory, a means for the necrophile-murderer Lester Ballard to "[pour] into that waxen ear everything he'd ever thought of saying to a woman. Who could say she did not hear him?" In *Blood Meridian* (1985), a tale of Western scalp hunters, death is all butchery and business, murder for profit in a landscape of *terra damnata*: "They moved among the dead harvesting the long black locks with their knives and leaving their victims rawskulled and strange in their bloody cauls.... Men were wading about in the red waters hacking aimlessly at the dead and some lay coupled to the bludgeoned bodies of young women dead or dying on the beach. One of the Delawares passed with a collection of heads like some strange vendor bound for market, the hair twisted about his wrist and the heads dangling and turning together."

And yet it should not be surprising that a man so taken with death should prove equally passionate about life, for each, he argues, makes the other possible. McCarthy turns to the wild to revel in the majesty of unnegotiated vitality. In his first novel, *The Orchard Keeper* (1965), he embodies this fierce joy in the hawk which the boy, John Wesley Rattner, traps for bounty, only later to comprehend that such an act is sacrilege. "I cain't take no dollar," he tells the clerk. "I made a mistake, he wadn't for sale." In later books, those set in the Southwest, McCarthy employs the horse, whose physical vitality he extols in lofty, mystical celebration:

> While inside the vaulting of the ribs between his knees the darkly meated heart pumped of who's will and the

EDWIN T. ARNOLD *is professor of English at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, and co-editor (with Dianne C. Luce) of* Perspectives on Cormac McCarthy *(University Press of Mississippi, 1993).*

Edwin T. Arnold's critical essay on Cormac McCarthy is another in our series of articles on contemporary Catholic writers of fiction. We have asked our essayists to give an overview of the author's work, showing our readers where and how this writer locates the central human drama, the big questions, the religious crisis of our time. What does the Catholic sensibility of Cormac McCarthy tell us about our common world, about the state of our souls? The most recently published article in the series was written by Edward T. Wheeler on Paul Theroux (May 20, 1994).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books discussed in this essay

The Crossing, *Knopf, $23, 426 pp.*
All the Pretty Horses, *Vintage, $12, 302 pp.*
Outer Dark, *Vintage, $10, 256 pp.*
Blood Meridian, *Vintage, $11, 327 pp.*
The Orchard Keeper, *Vintage, $11, 256 pp.*
Child of God, *Vintage, $10, 208 pp.*
Suttree, *Vintage, $12, 480 pp.*
The Stonemason, *Ecco Press, $19.95, 133 pp.*

> blood pulsed and the bowels shifted in their massive blue convolutions of who's will and the stout thighbones and knee and cannon and the tendons like flaxen hawsers that drew and flexed and drew and flexed at their articulations and of who's will all sheathed and muffled in the flesh and the hooves that stove wells in the morning groundmist and the head turning side to side and the great slavering keyboard of his teeth and the hot globes of his eyes where the world burned.

In *The Crossing* (1994), it is the wolf that stands as emblem of a fierce, uncompromised wisdom which sees the balance of life in death, and death in life:

> He said that the wolf is a being of great order and that it knows what men do not: that there is no order in the world save that which death has put there. Finally he said that if men drink the blood of God yet they do not understand the seriousness of what they do. He said that men wish to be serious but they do not understand how to be so. Between their acts and their ceremonies lies the world and in this world the storms blow and the trees twist in the wind and all the animals that God has made go to and fro, yet this world men do not see. They see the acts of their own hands or they see that which they name and call out to one another but the world between is invisible to them.

It is the "world between," the invisible place of blood and grace, that lies at the heart of McCarthy's fiction.

McCarthy, now sixty-one, is the author of seven published novels, one published five-act play, and one filmed screenplay. His first four books—*The Orchard Keeper*, *Outer Dark*, *Child of God*, and *Suttree* (1979) are set largely in the first half of the century, in Tennessee around Knoxville, where McCarthy attended Catholic high school and, without graduating, the University of Tennessee. His screenplay, *The Gardener's Son* (directed by Richard Pearce, and shown on PBS in 1977), is based on an 1876 murder in Graniteville, South Carolina. His drama, *The Stonemason* (published in 1994 but written earlier, apparently around 1980) takes place in Louisville, Kentucky, in the 1970s.

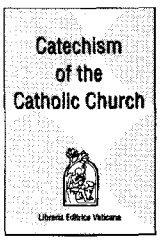
Shortly before the publication of *Suttree*, McCarthy left his second wife (he is twice divorced) and moved to the Southwest, first Tucson and then El Paso, which he has since used as his home base. His subsequent books have been Westerns, although to label them as such is no more accurate than to call his earlier books Southern or Appalachian; McCarthy's writings, for all their detailed accuracy of speech and custom and place, easily transcend any notion of region. *Blood Meridian: Or the Evening Redness in the West,* is a hyperviolent tale of scalp hunters in the 1840s, based on historical record and rendered with such realism that many readers cannot get past the first third of the book. *All the Pretty Horses* (1992), the first volume of The Border Trilogy, is set one hundred years later and, in effect, reconstructs the world of *Blood Meridian* in more romantic and forgiving terms (for McCarthy, at least); it is not surprising that it has proved to be his one best-seller, although the scope of its success (it sold over 100,000 copies in the first year; won the National Book Award and the National Critics Circle Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize; the screen rights were bought by Mike Nichols, filming set for next year) is astonishing, indeed. The second volume of the trilogy, *The Crossing*, was published last spring in an initial printing of 200,000 copies, and the book was a main selection of the Book of the Month Club. A darker, sadder, but also deeply compassionate work, *The Crossing* denies its readers the conventional plot satisfactions found in *Pretty Horses,* although it tells essentially the same story, paralleling its sixteen-year-old protagonist Billy Parham's journey with that of sixteen-year-old John Grady Cole in the first volume (and, inevitably, with the sixteen-year-old "kid" in *Blood Meridian*). Whether this somber, less engaging but, I believe, more significant novel will hold the readers of *All the Pretty Horses* remains to be seen. So far, however, it has sold well.

Incest, infanticide, necrophilia; drunkenness, debauchery, sacrilege; physical deformity and spiritual morbidity: this is a bleak place McCarthy explores in his fiction. But it has been too easy, especially of the books leading up to The Border Trilogy, to categorize McCarthy as an unusually talented purveyor of nihilistic Southern Gothic horror shows and to miss the essential religiosity at the core of his writing. Denis Donoghue, following earlier critics like Vereen M. Bell, the author of *The Achievement of Cormac McCarthy* (1988), describes the characters in the first novels as "recently arrived primates, each possessing a spinal column but little or no capacity of mind or consciousness." And while it is true that Culla Holme in *Outer Dark* or Lester Ballard in *Child of God* and, to jump ahead, the kid in *Blood Meridian* are unlikely to put their feelings of despair and alienation into reasoned words, Culla *dreams* of himself standing before a prophet, crying "Me...Can I be cured?"; from his cave Lester watches the "hordes of cold stars sprawled across the smokehole and wondered what stuff they were made of, or himself"; and the kid, after his year with the scalpers, "began to speak with a strange urgency of things few men have seen in a lifetime and his jailers said that his mind had come uncottered by the acts of blood in which he had participated." In later time he wanders the Southwest carrying with him a Bible he cannot read, moving inevitably toward his final judgment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

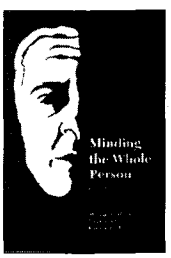
Fall Highlights

FROM LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PRESS



CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

This long-awaited historic document is the first universal catechism in four hundred years. Approved by Pope John Paul II, the *Catechism* clearly states the essential and fundamental content of Catholic faith and morals. Order through Loyola University Press and pay only $22.46—25% off the list price of $29.95.
Hc sewn, 800 pp., $22.46



MINDING THE WHOLE PERSON: Cultivating a Healthy Lifestyle from Youth through the Senior Years

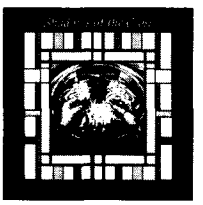
by William F. Haynes, Jr., M.D.
foreword by George H. Gallup, Jr.

One of our best-selling authors, Dr. William Haynes, returns with a guide to growing older healthily. Dr. Haynes teaches us ways of cultivating a healthy lifestyle and caring for the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—in the face of common aging problems. Sometimes funny, often inspiring, the author's real-life examples illustrate the incredible healing power of the spirit.
Pbk perfect, 180 pp., $14.95

MARY THE MOTHER OF ALL: Protestant Perspectives and Experiences of Medjugorje

edited by Sharon E. Cheston

Written by Protestants from various denominations, this collection of essays explores the power and mystery of Mary's appearances in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia. The authors describe their own experiences in Medjugorje and underscore the ecumenical spirit of Mary's messages of hope and love.
Pbk perfect, 130 pp., $13.95

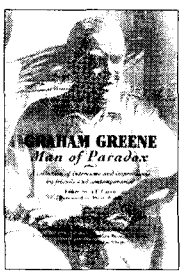


SHADOWS OF THE CROSS

Pencil drawings by Randy Dixon
Reflections by Molly Roth

An Ideal Gift Book!

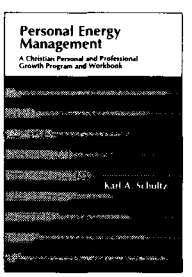
Explore the passion and death of Jesus Christ. Accomplished artist Randy Dixon depicts in pencil drawings each of the fourteen Stations of the Cross. The illustrations are accompanied by the reflections of author-poet Molly Roth.
Hc sewn, 64 pp., size 10" x 10", $21.95



GRAHAM GREENE: Man of Paradox

edited by A. F. Cassis
foreword by Peter Wolfe

This collection of essays sheds light on one of the finest literary talents of the twentieth century—Graham Green. Fifty-seven excerpts of interviews, personal impressions, diary entries, articles, essays, literary pieces, and recollections by friends and contemporaries reveal the private side of Greene: opinionated, charming, articulate, controversial, complex, at odds with conventional wisdom.
Hc sewn, 406 pp., $24.95, Pbk perfect, 406 pp., $16.95



PERSONAL ENERGY MANAGEMENT: A Christian Personal and Professional Growth Program and Workbook

by Karl A. Schultz

Schultz offers a Christian alternative to popular, quick-fix time and stress management books. Short, reflective essays emphasize core values and long-term growth rather than immediate, material results. Practical applications and exercises follow each major concept.
Pbk perfect, 147 pp., $14.95

Available at your religious bookstore or through Loyola University Press
3441 N. Ashland Avenue • Chicago, IL 60657
MasterCard/Visa orders call *(800) 621-1008* • *(312) 281-1818* in Illinois

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The kind of spiritual devastation suggested in these novels is detailed at length in *Suttree*, considered by many to be McCarthy's *magnum opus*. The remnants of his Catholic education and sensibilities are displayed most clearly in this lengthy work. Suttree is a lapsed Catholic but a haunted one, hounded by the specter of death, especially that of his stillborn twin brother: "If our dead kin are sainted we may rightly pray to them. Mother Church tells us so.... I followed him into the world, me.... And used to pray for his soul days past. Believing this ghastly circus reconvened elsewhere for all time. He in the limbo of the Christless righteous, I in a terrestrial hell." Having abandoned his wife and own child, having broken with his well-to-do family, Suttree passes his days fishing on the polluted Tennessee River which runs near the slums of Knoxville. "He said that he might have been a fisher of men in another time but these fish now seemed task enough for him," McCarthy writes.

Suttree is a brilliant book by many measures, a hugely comic, extravagantly written, richly told epic of bedraggled humanity. Peopled by over 150 named characters (some actual figures from 1950s Knoxville), it concentrates on Suttree and on the country youth Gene Harrogate, whom he meets in prison and who follows him to the big city. Harrogate (an extraordinary creation, echoed by Jimmy Blevins in *All the Pretty Horses* and, to a lesser extent, Boyd Parham in *The Crossing*) brings out Suttree's sense of responsibility; he tries to save the boy from his own innate foolishness. But Harrogate is hell-bent, beyond rescue, and finally Suttree can try to save only himself. By the end of the novel, he has nearly died, faced judgment in his delirium, and been granted a kind of grace (it is his mother's name: he comes to refer to himself as "son of Grace"). Given last rites by a young priest, he is asked, "Would you like to confess?" "I did it," he answers, and the truth embraces his whole life. "God must have been watching over you. You very nearly died," the priest says. "You would not believe what watches," Suttree answers. "He is not a thing. Nothing ever stops moving."

Although each of the earlier books (with the possible exception of *The Orchard Keeper*, a novel which suggests mystical truths but is largely devoid of outright religious considerations) questions the relationship between man and God, in *Suttree* it becomes a main theme. (The book was apparently written over a twenty-year period, and the three other novels can be read as offshoots of the larger work.) Starting with *Blood Meridian* (and including his play *The Stonemason*), McCarthy's writings have become increasingly solemn, his style more stately, his concerns more overtly theological. The world is a wild place in McCarthy's fiction, and its God a wild and often savage and mostly unknowable God, but a God whose presence constantly beckons. In *Blood Meridian*, the former priest, Tobin, says of the "Almighty": "Whatever could it mean to one who knows all? He's an uncommon love for the common man and godly wisdom resides in the least of things so that it may well be that the voice of the Almighty speaks most profoundly in such beings as lives in silence themselves.... No man is given leave of that voice."

"I ain't heard no voice," the kid spits in reply.

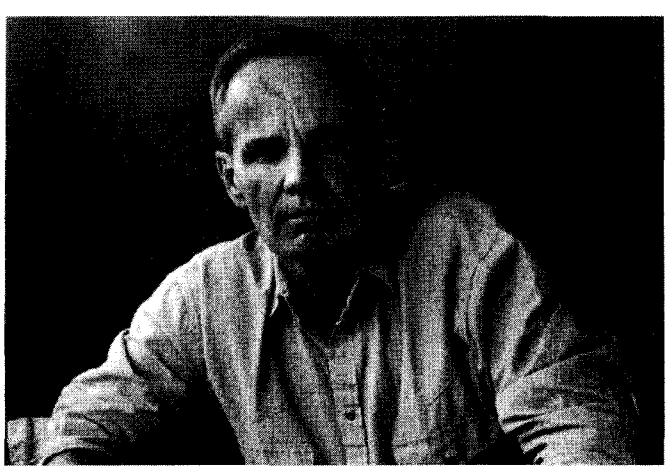
"When it stops...you'll know you've heard it all your life," Tobin answers.

It may be surprising to think of marauding scalp hunters debating the existence of God, but, as if in response to the muteness of his earlier characters, McCarthy's more recent ones engage in lengthy conversations discussing the issues of life and death and God's role in both. As another former priest tells Billy Parham in *The Crossing*, "Men do not turn from God so easily you see. Not so easily. Deep in each man is the knowledge that something knows of his existence. Something knows, and cannot be fled nor hid from. To imagine otherwise is to imagine the unspeakable." He continues:

> Nor does God whisper through the trees. His voice is not to be mistaken. When men hear it they fall to their knees and their souls are riven and they cry out to him and there is no fear in them but only that wildness of heart that springs from such longing and they cry out to stay his presence for they know at once that while godless men may live well enough in their exile those to whom he has spoken can contemplate no life without him but only darkness and despair.

There are godless men aplenty in McCarthy's novels, and many of them are evil, ranging from the three dark ghoulish figures who roam the land of *Outer Dark*, haunting Culla's path, to the "sooty-souled rascal" Judge Holden in *Blood Meridian*, who finally calls the kid to judgment, to the strange Indian who brings violence to Billy Parham's home and sets him journeying in *The Crossing*. But for each man there is always also the possibility of grace. "You think God looks out for people?" Lacey Rawlins asks John Grady Cole in *All the Pretty Horses*. He answers himself, "I do. Way the world is. Somebody can wake up and sneeze somewhere in Arkansas or some damn place and before you're done there's wars and ruination and all hell. You don't know what's going to happen. I'd say he's just about got to. I don't believe we'd make it a day otherwise." Or, as a Mexican bandit tells the kid in *Blood Meridian*, "When the lambs is lost in the mountain....They is cry. Sometime come the mother. Sometime the wolf."

McCarthy's protagonists are most often those who, in their travels, are bereft of the voice of God and yet yearn to hear him speak. This is especially true in the first two volumes of The



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POEMS
Anne Porter

Old in the City

You grow geraniums
And crochet baby-bonnets
But you walk slowly
Every day more slowly
As if there were a rock
In your poor belly

You stay away from doctors
They'd send you to the hospital
Where pieces are cut out of you
And after that you die

Instead you walk to the park
Where there are oaks and elm trees
That stream up to the sun
With triumph in their branches

Where there's a secret nation
Of squirrels who find it convenient
To set up their nests in the treetops
Like vendors who set up their stalls
By the steps of a great cathedral

And sometimes you sit in the playground
Waiting for the children
Who come when school is out

They rush in all together
Throwing their books on the benches
And racing to the swings

Over and over again
Their feet in their battered sneakers
Fly up into the air
And their hair too is flying
A wordless and intent
Delight is in their faces.

A Morning Dream

Towards morning
In a shallow sleep
I dreamed a dream

About a small black woman
Who somehow
Sat facing me
In a wooden chair

Her hands
Were resting in her lap
Her face was seamed
With poverty and age
And she was wearing
A dark Sunday dress
With a print of roses

She had been reading us
Passages from the Gospels
And it was beautiful
The way she read them
I thanked her for it

Sometimes I read like that
She said
It's from the Lord.

A Fragment

Here lie the bones
Of an old woman for whom life
Was very sweet

Down to the smallest
Leaf the briefest
Flash of dew

Or firefly
In the hedge or night
Of rain and thunder!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Border Trilogy. "Long voyages often lose themselves," a traveling actress tells Billy Parham. "The road has its own reasons and no two travelers will have the same understanding of those reasons. If indeed they come to an understanding of them at all. Listen to the *corridos* of the country. They will tell you. Then you will see in your own life what is the cost of things."

The "*corridos*," the stories of the country: these are the messages, the lessons, the parables McCarthy tells. As a character says in *The Crossing*, "For this world also which seems to us a thing of stone and flower and blood is not a thing at all but is a tale. And all in it is a tale and each tale the sum of all lesser tales and yet these also are the selfsame tale and contain as well all else within them. So everything is necessary. Every least thing.... Of the telling there is no end.... Rightly heard all tales are one." For both John Grady Cole and Billy Parham, the tale is very much the same, and the "cost of things" unusually high; and by his book's end, each boy seems depleted, shriven, leading one to contemplate their possible meeting in volume three and the consequences of that meeting.

Indeed, rightly seen, all of McCarthy's works take the same journey, tell the same tale, posit the same moral and spiritual questions. Everything is necessary, nothing ever stops moving, and when God speaks, in gift or in blood, all fall to their knees. As the priest tells Billy Parham, "In the end we shall all of us be only what we have made of God. For nothing is real save his grace." □

SCREEN

ADJUSTING TO HELL

'SHAWSHANK' & 'BLUE SKIES'

Some wise guy might dismiss *The Shawshank Redemption* as *Son of Cool Hand Luke*. So it is, but it's more than that. Frank Darabont's adaptation of a Stephen King novella seems to respond to the old Paul Newman movie, amend it, complete it.

A well-bred young banker is sent to serve a life term in Shawshank prison in Maine after being unjustly convicted of the murder of his wife and her lover. Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) seems to be a pragmatic version of Cool Hand Luke. Whereas Luke's only agenda was to run away from the chain gang, endure punishment, then run away again, Andy apparently has only limited, relatively realistic goals: he wants to survive prison with a minimum of decency, and he wants to share that decency with his circle of friends—the grimly stoic "Red" Redding (Morgan Freeman) and a few others. So he uses his knowledge of investment strategies and tax shelters to ingratiate himself with the head guard and the warden, both greedy brutes whose avarice can be played upon to neutralize their sadism. Dufresne's shrewdness gains him one concession after another: out-of-door work and free beer for his buddies, protection from a gang of rapists, the post of assistant librarian, and, finally, permission to start a prison tutorial program. Though Andy does give way to Luke-like bursts of rebellion—at one point he sends a gorgeous Mozart duet rippling over the prison PA system—and takes his lumps for them, he more often seems less a rebel than an incarnation of Pope John XXIII's dictum, "Notice everything, overlook much, improve a little."

Yet, finally, we learn that there's even more to Andy Dufresne than that. There simply has to be. Shawshank is hell and you really can't adjust to hell without also adjusting to despair. Dufresne plays a cooler hand to bring about his redemption than Luke ever did because he has a wild card, a very wild card indeed, up his sleeve. It takes him twenty years to play it but when he does you feel as if you're watching the perfect illustration of Dylan Thomas's lines,

Light breaks where no sun shines;
Where no sea runs, the waters of the heart
Push in their tides....

The impossible is achieved and so becomes possible.

And that it all seems probable (at least while you're watching the movie) is a tribute to screenwriter-director Darabont, most especially to *screenwriter* Darabont, for his directing talent is entirely rooted in his writing. This isn't always the case with talented young moviemakers. When you see, say, one of Spike Lee's better jobs, you're watching a brilliant directorial talent often illuminating his script, just as often overriding it, sometimes even trying to obliterate it when the director senses that his own writing is inadequate. But in *Shawshank* every cut, every angle, every camera strophe is at one with the writing. I'm tempted to say that the direction simply is the writing and vice-versa, for there is never any discrepancy between what you see and the movement of the narrative. Even the occasional spectacular shot, like the helicopter's eye-view of the prison grounds near the beginning, isn't an isolated stunt but precisely the sweepingly objective look at this city of slaves that you need at the particular moment. Darabont is an artist who knows when to rein in his eloquence and when to let it loose. To see his film right after *Natural Born Killers* (*see*, *Commonweal*, October 7) is to realize the difference between moviemaking that tells and moviemaking that bedizens.

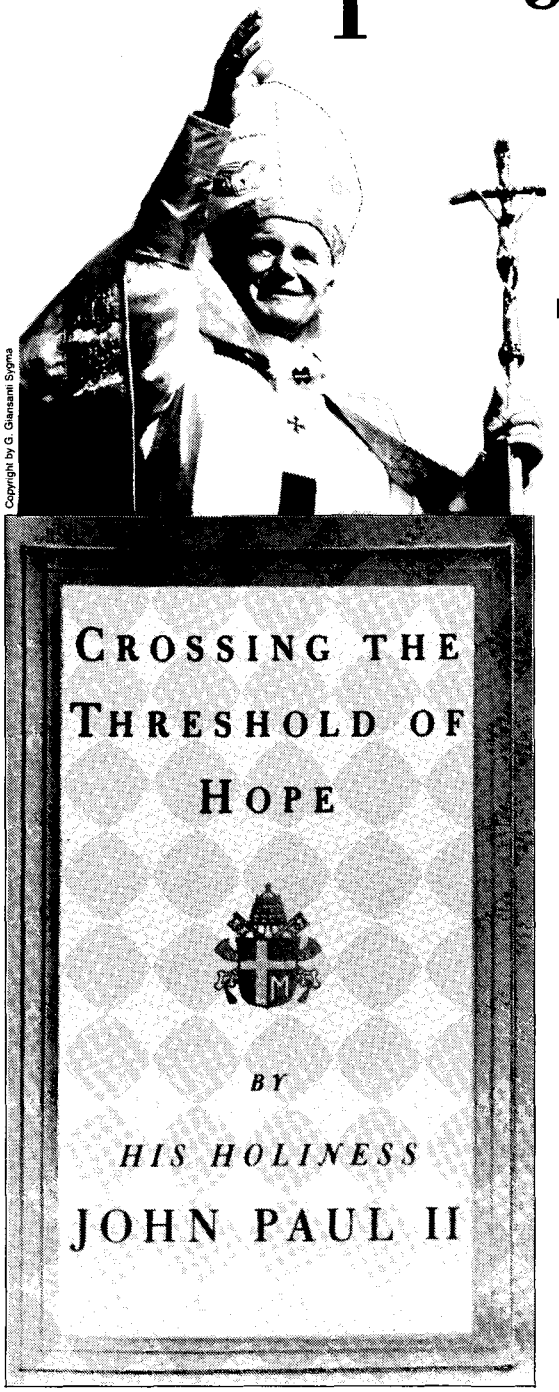
Let me call attention to two linked sequences. An old paroled convict, wonderfully played by James Whitmore, having realized that he can't adjust to life "outside," prepares to hang himself. In his dreary, halfway-house room, he climbs up to a beam and, instead of simply putting his head in the noose, takes out a knife. By keeping Whitmore's hands out of camera range while the ex-con does something with the knife, Darabont infuses our dread with sheer curiosity. Only after Whitmore hangs himself does the director reveal what he did with the knife, and this revelation deepens our sense of despair.

Much later in the movie Morgan Freeman is also paroled, also fails to adjust. His movement through civilian life parallels Whitmore's and he is even lodged in the same room. Freeman, too, climbs up to that beam with knife in hand and again the camera fails to take in what the ex-con is doing with it. But,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An international publishing event—

Pope John Paul II



CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE

John Paul II speaks from his heart in this extraordinary book. From the depths of his faith he shares his vision about the reality of God's presence, about the dignity of all people, about struggles with pain and suffering, about Jesus, who is way, truth, and life, and especially about the gift of hope. His heartfelt message to us all:

"Be not afraid!"

Published by Knopf

$20 at all bookstores or call 1-800-544-7922

How CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE came to be

This remarkable book contains the personal responses of Pope John Paul II to questions posed by Vittorio Messori, an Italian journalist. Even though the interview never took place, the questions which had been submitted in advance for review were returned to Messori a few months later complete with a handwritten manuscript of the Pope's responses. The Pontiff explained to Messori that he thought the questions were very important and deserved his response. "Do with them what you think is appropriate," the Pope said.

Also available in a **Large Print Edition** ($22), **Random House AudioBook** ($23), **Random House CD** ($45), **Knopf Spanish Language Edition**: *Cruzando el Umbral de la Esperanza* ($20), and **Spanish Language Random House AudioBook** ($23)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this time, when we see this man's handiwork we are elated and despair is dispelled. The two linked sequences, accomplished by Darabont's inextricable talents of writing and directing, certify Andy Dufresne's guiding principle, "Get busy living or get busy dying."

Darabont is also a wonderful director of actors. The entire cast is sterling, but the two leading players, Robbins and Freeman, are particularly fine. Robbins, with his slightly dented, vaguely asymmetrical face, gives Dufresne a prep school spruceness with a core of steel. Robbins helps preserve *Shawshank*'s tension by making Dufresne a man potentially vulnerable to a despair that he is determined to resist.

As Red, Morgan Freeman has an even more difficult role: the benevolent narrator trying to understand the hero for us. Red does so much observing and explaining that we may begin to wonder if he is really a character or just a device. Only at the end is Red Redding allowed to come into his own, and it's a tribute to Freeman that his massive presence and canny delivery of lines (and even cannier pauses) imbue Red with a complexity and attractiveness that keep us hooked from his first appearance to his last.

But *The Shawshank Redemption* isn't itself complex, just terribly moving. It has its faults. That the prison has a population apparently 98 percent Caucasian is a bit of sociological cowardice. All the villains are stereotypes. (There's no reason why villains shouldn't be well-rounded characters, yet remain utterly villainous. Think of Wes Studi's Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans*.) Though Robbins is excellent, he and his makeup artist haven't contrived to age Dufresne convincingly through twenty years of imprisonment. (Freeman seems to age in his very bones.) And all the coincidences that bring about Andy's false conviction and the subsequent revelation of the real murderer add up to a few coincidences too many.

Yet this movie finally earns the tears and applause that audiences are now bestowing on it. "*Simplice ma buono*," said Toscanini when he first read through Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. Simple but good. That's *The Shawshank Redemption*.

Blue Skies, on the other hand, is complex but finally runs away from its own complexity.

At the center of this movie is the marriage of Carly and Hank Marshall, and here is how their two very smart and smartass daughters sum it up:

"He's blind and she's crazy."

"They're perfect for each other!"

That's an accurate summary but only a summary. He's an army scientist catching flak from his superiors for urging underground hydrogen testing when they would prefer it on the surface. (The time is 1960.) She's a movie magazine addict who defines herself by mimicking Bardot and other current sexpots. As long as her husband is stationed in Hawaii, she's in paradise with plenty of sun, sand, blue water, and blue sky to set off her beauty and plenty of guest NATO officers to admire it. But when Hank's stubborness gets him transferred to the mainland, Carly has to exchange blue skies for Operation Blue Skies, a nuclear project that keeps her mate shuttling between Alabama and the West Coast while wife and daughter stagnate in the land of George Wallace.

But that's only the top, bickering layer of discord. Carly is a manic-depressive, with the emphasis on manic. Her emotional binges take on various forms: adulterous flings, reckless driving, raving in public, hyper-shopping, exotic dancing. Hank has no strategy to deal with her madness, only improvised tactics, like tossing her into a swimming pool after she's heated up all the males at a military social. He can't seem to face her problem at a basic level.

And that's because he doesn't really want to. Carly is never more alluring than when she's in an early stage of an emotional bender. Her antics embarrass, maybe even terrify him, but undeniably turn him on. He can recognize her illness for what it is but can't recognize his own opportunism. Let Carly act out her dream of herself as sex goddess and Hank becomes her votary. His ministrations turn sexual and reconciliations end up in bed. But their daughters clasp each other in misery as Hank and Carly verbally lacerate each other at top volume in the next room.

This is passionate and complicated stuff, and the screenplay serves it up hot and rich for more than two-thirds of the way through the story. The dialogue is witty and concise, and the narrative goes in interesting directions.

Until it takes a fatal wrong turn. I kept wondering how the subplot concerning Hank's friction with army brass was going to dovetail with the main story of marital havoc. Well, it didn't. The political intrigue hijacks the domestic drama. In the final thirty minutes, Hank is pretty much out of the movie—dragooned into an asylum and drugged into torpor because he has been trying to foil a government cover-up of a nuclear disaster. There is a blood-freezing moment when Carly looks at her vegetableized husband and—smiles! He is the dependent one now and she can be the nurturer. But we're soon out of such Strindbergian depths as Carly zooms around trying to expose the government plot and spring her husband from the loony bin. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* has turned into *The China Syndrome*, and everything is tidied up in a reassuring dénouement that is utterly untrue to the messy veracities that are the real substance of this movie.

That's a shame, because as long as the script fuels them,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tommy Lee Jones and Jessica Lange give the performances of their lives. Jones's coiled strength is mesmerizing and Lange makes Carly's flights from reality both dangerous and lyrical. In fact, Lange is so convincingly self-entranced that she gave me R.D. Laing-like doubts about how beneficial psychiatric treatment would be for Carly. Would sanity diminish this woman? Under the late Tony Richardson's attentive direction, this performance, like all great acting, enforces André Gide's warning, "Please do not understand me too quickly."

It's just too bad that Richardson and his writers finally wanted to understand their own rich story too tidily, too comfortingly.

RICHARD ALLEVA

MEDIA

TWICE-TOLD TALES

WHY 'LAW & ORDER' WORKS

I am, and I admit it, a bear of rather little brain, which may be why it took a stint of jury duty for me to realize what a *really* good show—and what an unusual one—is "Law and Order," now beginning its fifth season on NBC. (As usual, of course, my wife Celeste got it before I did, remarking at least two years ago that "the only thing wrong with "Law and Order" is that it should be *two* hours long.") Five seasons for a series is the equivalent of the Biblical threescore and ten for a person; and early episodes of "L&O" are now being rerun in syndication. So this is a good time to talk about a rare bird: a TV series that starts with a brilliant premise, delivers with class and style, and—for sure rare—stays strong.

I call creator Dick Wolf's originating concept "brilliant," but it is rather slyly so—the way all real innovations in genre fiction at first appear to be just variations on established themes. Our obsession with the literature of crime—and by "our" I mean Western culture's—takes one of two seemingly inevitable forms. One is the detective story: as in "Who brought this terrible plague upon Thebes?" (Sophocles) or "Who killed Laura Palmer?" (David Lynch). The other is the trial narrative: "Has Socrates corrupted the youth of Athens?" or, say, "Did Captain Queeg's actions during the hurricane justify relieving him of command?" That's not exactly a Manhattan-Project-level secret, I grant you. But it's not often remarked that, in popular and so-called "high" culture alike, the two forms are not only complementary, but mutually exclusive.

In other words the detective story assumes that once the investigator—private or official—has reconstructed the events of the crime so as to point to a single perpetrator, the story is over, chaos has been controlled again, and the business of a trial—if the "perp" hasn't already been killed—is superfluous. Now anybody with the slightest knowledge of law enforcement realizes that this is only slightly less realistic than tales of Hobbits, elves, and dragons. Even more bemusing, perhaps, is the assumption of most trial stories that the crime is not *really* solved until the trial has finished. Think about "Perry Mason," "Matlock," or most of the trial scenes in "L.A. Law"; the trial is a pressure-cooker confessional in which, sooner of later, to the gasps of the jury, one of the witnesses will break down on the stand and confess that *he,* not the defendant, did it. Any lawyer will tell you that this is Hobbits, elves, dragons, *plus* Vulcans, Klingons, and the Kilgore Rangerettes.

We'll get to why we need to reinvent again and again these inexhaustible fictions. For now the important point is that Brother Wolf—I repeat myself, TV is a *producer's* medium—had the splendid idea that "Law and Order," for once, *would* combine those two incommensurable stories. Simple? You bet. I'll meet him in heaven somewhere near the guy who first thought oysters and Tabasco might do nicely together. Because by putting them together, he redefined—and helps us understand a little better—both.

Every episode of "L&O" contains two stories, or actually, two tellings of the same story, one a detective narrative, the other a trial. A crime has occurred: Rex Stout once said that the damned hard thing about writing detective fiction is that the most interesting event in your tale has happened before the tale can start. The first half-hour follows the cops—always—with cast changes—two detectives working under a lieutenant—as through interviews and forensics they center upon their perp. The second half-hour follows the prosecutors—two assistant DA's working under a DA—as they bargain with the defendant's lawyers and consider among themselves precisely *what*

Audio Tapes Available!

From Creation to the End of Days

The Bible on Human Fate

A Series of Courses & Lectures
Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30, Dec. 7 and 14

Jewish Theological Seminary
3080 Broadway at 122 Street, New York City

For a brochure call: (212)678-8996 ext. #8

Audio Tapes are available for this and previous series.

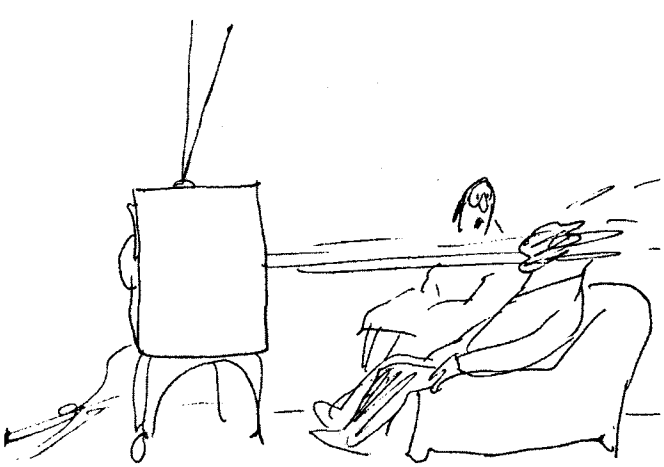
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

charges, and what penalty, they can reasonably propose. But that only begins to describe the formulaic quality of the show—and, of course, if you think "formulaic" means "bad," then you shouldn't read Shakespeare's comedies or listen to the blues.

The special quality of "L&O," the quality that sets it apart from even such fine shows as "Homicide" or "NYPD Blue," is, I think, its deliberate and bracing coldness. Cop shows and lawyer shows are mainly melodrama—they want us to care about, not just the crime, but the investigator-heroes; they want us to *like* Columbo or Matlock or Andy Sipowicz. "L&O" doesn't. Every shot opens with a black screen and the place and date of the scene displayed at bottom left. Any reference to the private lives of the detectives or the prosecutors is relegated, at best, to throwaway dialogue. The cops talk the way cops do talk about awful crimes, with defensively smartass irony that can seem, to outsiders, brutally cynical. And the prosecutors, for all their commitment to the idea of "justice," find themselves again and again forced into compromise, into moral diminution, by the very system of proof to which they are committed. Even the camera work brilliantly enforces chilliness and distance. The "detective" scenes are mainly city-street shots, quick-cuts, and documentary-style handheld, while the "trial" scenes tend to be longer takes, dark interiors, with lots of tight close-ups—film's version of the introspective. The writing, the cinematography, and the brilliant ensemble acting have this final effect: we are never allowed to forget that what is going on is the reconstruction and judgment of a single awful event.

And that's what I mean by the show's coldness. If you've read this column before, you know that I think literary theorists a rather sorry lot, on the whole. But they have invented the term "metafiction"—by which they mean "a story about storytelling"—and though they don't use it very intelligently, it applies here. "L&O" is *about* the fictions of detection and judgment that we use to throw nets of meaning over the unspeakable or the incomprehensible when it erupts into our lives. It is about our "rage for order" (Wallace Stevens's phrase) that impels us to make up a story—any story—to account for the unaccountable.

It's what I learned on jury duty, though I should have known it before. The jury trial is a kind of storytelling also, no less than the investigation of the detective or the army of detectives. But the trial is an act of *collective* storytelling; we twelve—actually, the whole community—agree to agree upon a version of the tale we can all live with: asking not, like the detective, "who did it?" but, rather more complicatedly, "under what circumstances *did* he do it?" I'm tempted to say that the detective story is ethical, while the trial story is moral: the one concerned with "grievous offense" and the other with "sufficient reflection and full consent of the will." And I am further tempted to observe that those two stories are not necessarily the same one, but between them are the confusion and glory of our conscious life. Surely, since we have been either privy or subjected to the William Kennedy Smith, Rodney King, and now O.J. Simpson real-world trials—we ought by now to realize that "Law" is "Order" only because it is a commonly sustained fiction, and that fiction is what we have as our stab at the truth. (Kierkegaard would have been one helluva media critic.)



"My! Television is getting more sophisticated every day!"

Not that "Law and Order" is Dostoevsky. But it has maintained a consistently high level of intelligence and has, with wit and grace, in scores of episodes, raised just the kinds of concerns I've mentioned. Its ensemble cast has varied greatly, but, perhaps just because the major players are kept so oddly peripheral to the action itself, its general tone has not changed in five years. The only original cast members still there are Chris Noth as the brash young detective Mike Logan, and Stephen Hill as the thoughtful, old-man-of-the-mountain DA Adam Schiff. And this season, the show runs with perhaps its most important cast change. From the beginning, the main prosecutor was played by Michael Moriarty, as Assistant DA Ben Stone.

But last year Moriarty had the courage and intelligence and bad sense to tell Janet Reno that her ideas about government censorship of TV violence were silly and fascist. (This is especially grand since "Law and Order" is, itself, considerably less violent than any given episode of "Married...with Children.") He subsequently left the show. He is replaced by Sam Waterston (of the wonderful "I'll Fly Away") as Assistant DA Jack McCoy.

It will be fascinating to watch "L&O" this season, since that may be the one personnel change that could change the exquisite balance of the show. Moriarty is one of our most underappreciated actors, and perfectly incarnated the coolness, the intellectual distance, that is so much a part of "L&O": he is, almost glacially, without affect—"cold as only the Irish are," the Sicilian-derived Celeste tells me on every possible occasion. And Sam Waterston, immensely gifted, is quite other. A kind of Montgomery Clift in middle age, he can telegraph violent emotion violently reined-in by picking up a paperweight from his desk.

If NBC, losing nerve, turns "L&O" into a crusading-prosecutor series, nothing will be lost but the original genius of the show. After five seasons, as I said, syndication—and decades of income—is guaranteed anyhow. But the show itself is just too brilliant, and Waterston is too talented a man, to be squandered like that. Here's hoping the writers keep faith with the concept, and that this brittle, clever metafiction stays on a while.

I'm sure Soren would agree. FRANK McCONNELL

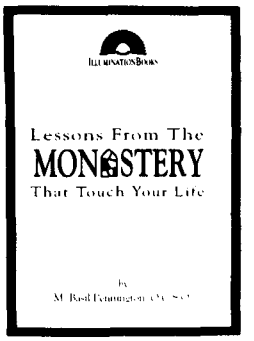
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

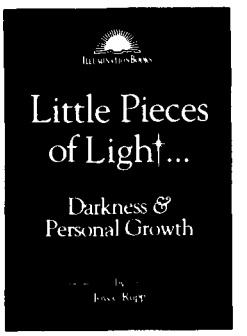
NEW BOOKS *from* Paulist Press

ILLUMINATIONBOOKS

AS YOU AND THE ABUSED PERSON JOURNEY TOGETHER, *Sharon E. Cheston, illustrated by Nicholas Markell.* Shows how many different people can assist a sexually abused person without taking the victim's rights and responsibility away and how even the smallest honest sharing can go a long way to promote healing for the victim. **Paper $3.95.**

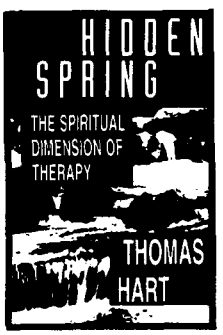
LESSONS FROM THE MONASTERY THAT TOUCH YOUR LIFE, *M. Basil Pennington, OCSO, illustrated by Nicholas Markell.* Explains how some of the traditional monastic practices for developing our Christ-life can be adapted to fruitful use in the busy lives of all persons. **Paper $3.95.**

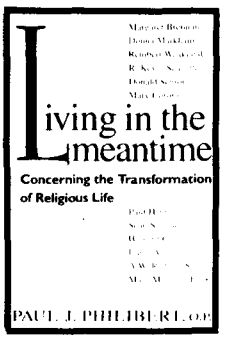


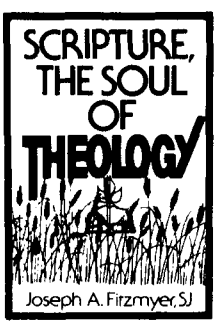


LITTLE PIECES OF LIGHT ... DARKNESS AND PERSONAL GROWTH, *Joyce Rupp, illustrated by Nicholas Markell.* This hope-filled book shows all touched by darkness that there is always a strong light within that can comfort, guide, and transform the heart. **Paper 3.95.**

SPIRITUALITY, STRESS AND YOU, *Thomas E. Rodgerson, illustrated by Nicholas Markell.* Blends the wisdom of scripture and the insight of psychology in order to give tangible help to persons under stress in our culture. **Paper $3.95.**







ARE THERE STRIPES IN HEAVEN? *Lee Klein, illustrated by Pam Mauseth.* This is a children's story about love and sensitivity and the special relationship that exists between a brother and his sister who has Down's Syndrome. For 4-10 year olds. **Paper $4.95.**

HIDDEN SPRING, The Spiritual Dimension of Therapy, *Thomas Hart.* Using theory and case studies, the author demonstrates how psychology and spirituality are at one in promoting human healing, growth, and fulfillment. **Paper $11.95.**

IMAGE GUIDANCE AND HEALING, *Elizabeth-Anne Janek.* A guide for counselors as well as a self-help book that explores the rich possibilities of health applications of the image guidance process. **Paper $10.95.**

LECTIONARY-BASED CATECHESIS FOR CHILDREN, A Catechist's Guide, *Sylvia DeVillers.* This practical book shows how to integrate lectionary-based catechesis into existing curriculum-based parish programs. It includes a 12-step outline for a catechist formation program. **Paper $10.95.**

LIVING IN THE MEANTIME, Concerning the Transformation of Religious Life, *edited by Paul J. Philibert, O.P.* Fourteen essays on religious life in the U.S. by experts in this field that describe the rationale and the spirit of renewal of consecrated life since the last ecumenical council and summarize the challenges that lie immediately ahead. **Paper $14.95.**

O HAPPY FAULT, Personal Recovery Through Spiritual Growth, *Robert M. Garrity.* This highly readable blend of modern recovery psychology with the timeless wisdom of Christian spiritual classics is for anyone and everyone on the spiritual journey. **Paper $11.95.**

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP, Sundays and Feast Days Cycle C, *Daniel Donovan.* Biblical and theological reflections on the scriptural passages assigned for the Sundays and major feast days of the C cycle. **Paper $11.95.**

REFRESHED BY THE WORD, Cycle C, *John E. O'Brien.* Prayers, reflections and provocative faith questions that enable scripture to be applicable to everyday lives and activities. Ideal for small faith sharing communities. **Paper $10.95.**

SCRIPTURE, THE SOUL OF THEOLOGY, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. Four essays that explain how the proper interpretation of Scripture should function in relation to Tradition, in the study of theology, and in ecumenical work. **Paper $10.95.**

SITTING STILL, An Encounter with Christian Zen, *Patricia Hart Clifford.* This first-person account of a week-long Zen retreat comments insightfully on the meditation process itself, as well as shows how to bring the experience back home. **Cloth $9.95.**

WATER FROM THE ROCK, Finding Grace in Times of Grief, *Lyn Fraser.* Based on the psalms, this non-denominational collection of 73 short reflections is for anyone experiencing grief– offering compassion, support and hope, while acknowledging the intense pain and anger that accompanies such loss. **Paper $6.95.**

WHEN YOUR KIDS GO TO COLLEGE, *Lucantonio N. Salvi and Michael J. Hunt, C.S.P.* A guide to help parents deal with the many issues that concern them when their teenager goes off to college: negative influences on campus, grades and careers, keeping the faith, and how to be caring but not intrusive parents. **Paper $5.95.**

Available from your local bookstore or
PAULIST PRESS 997 Macarthur Blvd., Mahwah, NJ 07430 201-825-7300

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A shot across the brow

MARTIN E. MARTY

When poll-takers ask a hundred typical Americans to describe themselves religiously, one-fourth of them say they are Catholic. One-fourth define themselves as "[Mainstream] Protestant," or they get classified as such when they identify their denominations. A third fourth of them represent a complex mix: African-American Protestant, Mormon, Muslim, Orthodox, Jewish, "Other," or "non." That leaves the fourth fourth, which is usually code-named "Evangelical." This one includes the born-again evangelicals, fundamentalists, pentecostals, Southern Baptists, Missouri Lutherans, Christian Reformed, and other evangelism-minded conservatives.

This fourth cohort of fellow-citizens and believers has been surprisingly active politically and evangelistically and has made headlines for a quarter-century. They "work their cohort," as a sociologist might say, demonstrating energies and efficiency unmatched by most other religionists. For all the stir they create, it is still safe to surmise that Catholics of theological bent know less about these evangelicals as an intellectual community than they do about mainstream Protestants, Jews, or their fellow Catholics. Those who would now like to become acquainted with their neighbors and potential conversation partners will find no better book to serve as a guide than *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, by Mark Noll of Wheaton College, who is also the best personal guide to the subject that I know.

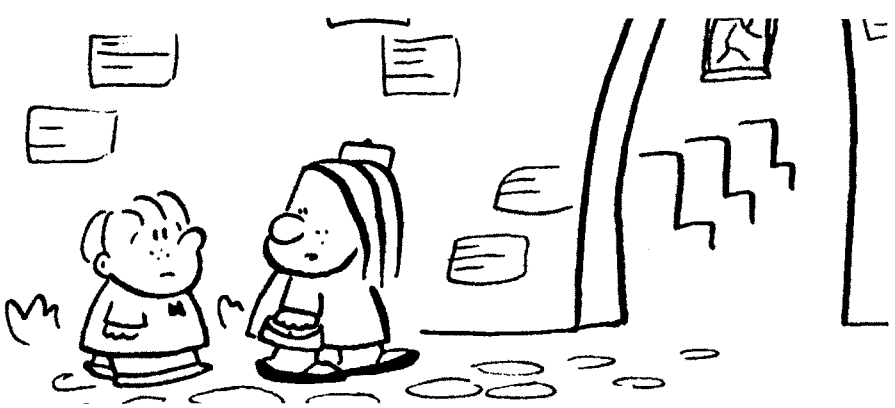
Certainly Catholics and others are aware of this multimillion-member cluster of fellow Christians in America. Then why do most of them know so little about the mind, the intellect, the brainwork of such a huge congregation? Though he is their sympathetic critic, Noll has a blunt answer: "We," as Noll, an insider, calls his main readers, have not valued the mind, theology, reflection, the engagement with secular thought. To be more brusque, Noll adds: "The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind."

Book discussed in this essay

The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind, *by Mark A. Noll, Eerdmans, $19.99, 274 pp.*

Evangelicalism in Noll's account has a generous heart and soul. Its hands do good works. But it has lost the kind of competence and interest in scholarship its forebears brought to their faith. And yes, there were forebears. Noll and his company claim as spiritual ancestors all sorts of figures, beginning with the New Testament lovers of the mind like Paul. More surprisingly in his gallery are shapers of early Christianity like Augustine and even medieval Catholics like Thomas Aquinas. Of course, the sixteenth-century reformers, especially Calvin, are evangelical progenitors. In the immediate family Noll claims the great premodernist theologians of the Puritan tradition, supremely New England's Jonathan Edwards. Edwards conjoined the concerns of heart and mind better than any other American. Latter-day evangelicalism's mindlessness gets to be described as a fall from Edwards and his lineage.

If there was a fall, there had to have been a rise, a crest. Alongside Edwards, Noll praises the pietists, revivalists, and some Christian thinkers of the eighteenth century. He affirms the basics of their move to embrace a version of the Enlightenment, to celebrate reason of a certain sort. In fact, there was an Evangelical Enlightenment. It featured the Scottish Common Sense Realism cherished by some of the American founders. Noll has expounded that philosophical school elsewhere and presents a condensation of that exposition here. It must represent *terra incognita* to many Catholics and most others if they are not historians of philosophy. This Enlightenment lived on in the minds of Princetonians like John Witherspoon in Revolutionary War years, and among



"Now, remember—the punch line is 'Amen.'"

MARTIN E. MARTY *teaches the history of American religion at the University of Chicago and is the semi-delinquent adviser to a graduate student group, Evangelical Divinity Students Eating Lunch (EDSEL).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

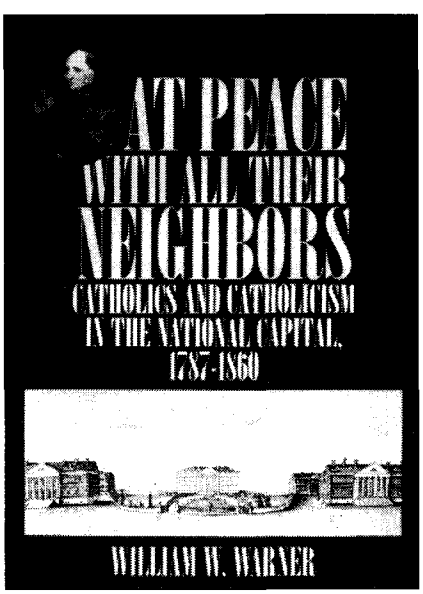
Princeton-based and other theologians for a century-and-a-half more. This school of thought impelled evangelicals to be rationalist, apologetic, scientific because fact-obsessed, and thus, they thought, able to commend themselves to the increasingly secular community. This community found its home in the emergent universities whose scholars, in the age of Darwin, had no reason to measure themselves by evangelical norms.

The Evangelical Enlightenment was not all misconceived; indeed, within limits, Noll can praise its expounders for their alertness and audacity. Its favored philosophy taught people to trust their senses; to rely on facts; to assume that one should and could deal "objectively" with the mysteries of faith. Their embrace of it was fateful. Most secular intellectuals abandoned Common Sense Realism and ever after left the Protestant apologists stranded. The evangelical intellectuals of this tradition built elaborate edifices but they stood on a metaphysically condemned site. Some of these thinkers, it is true, made efforts to adapt to mild evolutionary thought so long as it was pointedly theistic. However, the threat of evolution seen as natural selection became so violent that evangelical militants found it necessary to fight against it.

Holding their ground against enemies such as Darwinism, the biblical criticism being imported from Germany to the fashionable seminaries, and the modernist moves by progressive theologians on the left in their own denomination, the evangelicals mingled grief over their loss, resentment over the seizures of their bastions, and fear of threats to faith, with ambition, in efforts to state their case. Unfortunately, in Noll's reading, this mixture soon led to the invention of hardline and reactive evangelicalism. Thus was born the fundamentalist movement in the 1920s. Under fundamentalism most evangelicals turned at once rigid, defensive, and belligerent as they fought for control of their denominations (especially Presbyterian and Baptist), seminaries, missionary agencies, and whatever else Protestants employed as instruments of church life.

Fundamentalism was not by definition anti-intellectual, but, in Noll's reading, it became mindless. Inevitably, evangelicalism experienced an internal schism even as it took part in creating a split within Protestantism as a whole. Name-calling and the formation of parties led to a house divided. By 1941 and 1942 fundamentalists and evangelicals, who were usually lumped together by nonfundamentalists, including Catholics, formed separate organizations and went separate ways. Billy Graham and his kind became the popular leaders of the evangelicals. But while he was friendly with intellectuals, his kind of revivalism did not inspire sufficient intellectual endeavor. For all the competence and good will of Graham and his kind, evangelicalism in either of its moderate or right-wing expressions was left with too little mind.

Those who stand at some distance from evangelical quarrels may wonder why Noll, and now I, are being commended—this review is a commendment!—to work their way through the labyrinth of Common Sense thought, arcane Protestant movements, and fundamentalist formulas. What



A New Chronicle from a Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author

At Peace with All Their Neighbors
Catholics and Catholicism in the National Capital, 1787-1860
William W. Warner
"An unfamiliar aspect of American history is brought to life in this gracefully written work. American Catholics may learn much about their denomination's contribution in the early days of the American republic. I very much enjoyed reading it and I'm sure that many others will."—Robert Stone, author of *Outerbridge Reach*
320 pp. November 1994
Cloth: ISBN 0-87840-557-7 $29.95

A Primer for Health Care Ethics
Essays for a Pluralistic Society
Jean De Blois, C.S.J., Patrick Norris, O.P., and Kevin O'Rourke, O.P.
272 pp. September 1994
Paperback: ISBN 0-87840-562-3 $19.95

Bridging the Sacred and the Secular
Selected Writings of John Courtney Murray
J. Leon Hooper, S.J., editor
This new collection brings together for the first time the explicitly theological essays of the renowned twentieth-century philosopher.
392 pp. November 1994
Cloth: ISBN 0-87840-561-5 $55.00

The Ethics of Our Climate
Hermeneutics and Ethical Theory
William O'Neill, S.J.
An interpretation of the nature and scope of practical reasoning in light of postmodern philosophical criticism.
"A critical yet sensitive retrieval of past wisdom applied to modern problems."
—Louis Dupré, T.L. Riggs Professor of Religious Studies, Yale University
160 pp. November 1994
Cloth: ISBN 0-87840-565-8 $40.00

At Bookstores, or from

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS
P.O. BOX 4866 HAMPDEN STATION, BALTIMORE, MD 21211-4866 • PHONE: 410-516-6995 FAX: 410-516-6998

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interest other than antiquarianism is addressed and who but historians of thought, especially of inferior thought, might care? Noll, talking to his "us" and not the rest of us, spends little time answering that question. But whoever knows something of the power of evangelicalism and fundamentalism in today's religious and national economy will come to understand it better than before. On these pages Noll describes the formal framework out of which developed conservative Protestant views of the sort now represented in debates over abortion, human sexuality, earthly politics, and other issues that concern us all.

Noll, a scholar of moderate temper, chooses immoderate language to make his points. The word "scandal" appears seven times on the Contents page; it means "offensive." Noll sees evangelical mindlessness as offensive to God, the church catholic, the intellectual community, and the thoughtful evangelical minority. He names fundamentalism an "intellectual disaster" in another chapter heading. Noll offers illustrations for these charges, also at chapter length. He uses examples from politics, evangelical defenses of the United States as a fortress and a kind of lost kingdom of God to be recovered, and from science (as in "creationism versus evolution").

For all the attacks Noll makes, this is a positive book. In evangelical terms, it is a call for mindless sinners to repent, to recover the mind for God and their movement. They are to delight in the world which God will take action to end, and from which Christ saves sinners, but also the cosmos which God created good and in which God is incarnate in Christ. Noll is a more incarnational thinker than most evangelical leaders have been. He uses his view of God's love of the earth and involvement in its travail and as it moves toward its destiny to inspire fellow evangelicals. They are to contemplate the wonders of creation, science, human invention, politics, the academy, letters, arts, and more.

An evangelical renaissance of sorts *is* underway, nowhere more visibly than in the community of religious historians to which Noll belongs and which he as much as anyone may very well lead. He does not brag about the achievements of these historians. However, one can deduce something about their strong situation and achievement in this area from his footnote references. Let me as a bystander, a sometime participant-observer, say it: women and men in evangelicalism are, by a dozen or a score, in the front ranks of achievement in the writing of history. But such recovery among other disciplines is more spotty. In literature, one sees evangelical scholarship devoted to apologist littérateurs like C. S. Lewis. Popular evangelical taste in letters, however, runs to popapocalypticism in the appalling novels of Frank Peretti, for whom Noll manifestly has little sympathy. Evangelicals as Christian exemplars, Noll notes, are still at the far margins in scientific inquiry and formulation. They have, however, regained ground and become respectable voices in philosophy, thanks to leadership of people like Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff.

"By 'the mind' or 'the life of the mind,'" writes Noll, "I am not thinking primarily of theology as such." But if evangelicalism is to be taken with real seriousness, it must be ready to be appraised by others who will examine its systematic theological claims. While there is much enterprise, Noll sees its results to be unappreciated by evangelicals. It seldom is taken with sufficient seriousness by sometimes prejudiced but often judicious assessors in the rest of Christianity. He observes that evangelical theologians got and get enlargements of their company thanks to crossovers from the mainstream, and from some immigrant infusions like the Lutherans and Hollanders (more of the latter than the former). The larger community also listens to some transatlantic voices, and on occasion heeds the still underrepresented evangelical pioneers in major research universities. But Noll's cast of theological characters—William Abraham, Donald Bloesch, Gabriel Fackre, Richard Mouw, Thomas Oden, J. I. Packer, Clark Pinnock, Ronald Sider, David Wells, and William Willimon—or their predecessors like Carl Henry, Edward John Carnell, and the like, are not always reckoned with as much as they or Noll might wish. He is clearly not satisfied overall with the achievement of those whose names he clusters.

What is one to say of all this? First, when Noll speaks of the mindlessness and theological weakness of evangelicalism, the fair-minded ecumenical Christian will ask: mindless compared to what? This is not a third-of-a-century in which many Catholics, mainstream Protestants, or Jews in systematic theology are churchhold names. Few have manifest impact in their secular surrounds, either. These years there is good enterprise in some areas, such as in theology when it is related to medical ethics. But, for all the numbers of scholars within the discipline and for all the enterprise, there remain great gulfs between unreckoned-with theologians and the clergy or laity on one hand and, on the other, between these unrecognized theologians and the larger academic community.

Could there have been or could there be a pandemic "fall" or a "scandal" also in nonevangelical Christian circles? one must ask. Are energies elsewhere, as they are in evangelicalism, going into spiritual, pious, activist, relational, and therapeutic directions, all of them valid but few of them fully open to the energies of those who would "love the Lord with their minds"? Noll's book can provide a template or model for those who would deal with malaise or crisis in Catholic and in other Protestant theology or in the larger intellectual enterprise.

Second, one might henceforth make more sense of the scandal of mindlessness on the part of many secular academics, who employ stereotypes as they reject all other Christian theology as well as the evangelical versions. It could be that evangelicalism has unwittingly or instinctively been responding to a change, even a crisis, in secular thought. Over against the Evangelical Enlightened ones who stayed too long with their Common Sense Realist/Enlightenment partnership, evangelicals, without always knowing it, now might be in the vanguard of those who have spotted that there is a crisis in the Enlightenment project itself, wavering in support of the rationale off which so many in the academy still live today.

Those who are called postmodernists regularly point to this crisis in the under-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

standings of reason, or to the widespread rejection of secular rational approaches and syntheses. As I read Noll it occurred to me that the evangelicals were among the first to realize the challenge to some thought patterns on which the West has long relied. But few have known what to do with their discoveries.

Third, maybe the best evangelical thinkers have known what to do and have tried to say it, but then got little hearing for another reason that Noll spends little time expounding: because of prejudice against evangelical thought. Several factors were at play. No doubt thanks to evangelicalism's rejection of all science that did not match their Evangelical Enlightenment standards; also, thanks to its roughshod cultural expression in opposition to evolution; and its habit of negating nonevangelical thought, even of Catholic and Protestant scholars, evangelicalism came to be stigmatized. The ostracism of evangelicalism may often have been warranted. But are evangelicals now the only challengers to secular rational hegemonies? Do not Catholics and mainstream Protestant thinkers also believe in and articulate witness to God as creator, rescuer, the incarnate one, who is active in the world? Why are evangelicals singled out for sneers or cold shoulders by the rest of the public, especially the elites? Has the academy at large taken a look at what evangelicals like Noll are beginning to offer? Noll is too even-tempered to show resentment; he is more interested in helping evangelicals find something to say and a way to say it, if a platform appears to give them a hearing.

Is there something innate about or endemic to the very intention of evangelicalism that makes the "life of the mind" enterprise even more rare and difficult there than in Catholicism and in much other Protestantism? One has to take such a question seriously. Paul Tillich once divided Christian emphases into, on the one hand, devotion to "Catholic substance" as part of a dialectic and "the Protestant principle of prophetic protest" on the other. Catholics, it was often thought, had better be good at the substantive side of the Catholic vision, and evangelicals should be the most prophetic of Protestants. But their posture handicaps them. It is hard to begin with the mixture of an oppositional stance to a fallen world, suspicion of human hubris, skepticism about the mind and will when they set out to justify themselves before God, and then to move on to the positive embrace of the world and its physical and mental substance. That may be one reason so many evangelicals gave up on the effort entirely.

Noll, however, wants to keep a dialectic, without using its terms. In H. R. Niebuhr's language, the two spheres of action can be expressed under several motifs. One of these for many evangelicals is the "Christ against culture" theme that prophets favor. Another set of evangelicals "fall" into the "Christ of culture" style when they let their guard down and idolize parts of culture, such as the symbols of American nationalism or worldly success. Evangelicalism's natural home, in any case, is with the "Christ transforming culture" theme that comes naturally to Calvinists. But Niebuhr himself also defined a dialectical position, "Christ and culture in paradox," which he associated, for example, with Luther.

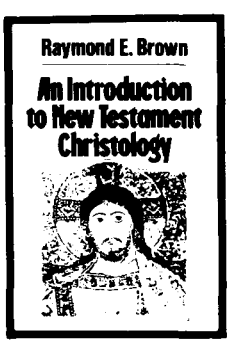
"We" Lutherans have overheard Mark Noll praising the Lutheran potential for so long that we suspect him of pro-Lutheran sympathies and identifications. The dialectic that courses through this book gives reason for us to enjoy that suspicion. He is also friendly to the Catholic "life of the mind" enterprises when they combine affirmation of God's created world with prophecy against its fallen manifestations. Wouldn't it be nice if Noll would next take as searching a look at us as he does at evangelicalism?

Not necessarily, or not simply. Noll might find almost as much "scandal" here on this greener side of the fence as he does in his parched evangelical homeland. One hopes he might with equal energy here as there promote his "renaissance." Even to call for such a rousing, to diagnose reasons for its necessity, and then to describe its traces and tracks would represent first steps toward such a renaissance, in a time and place when and where, I am sure Noll would judge, it is so direly needed. □

New from RAYMOND E. BROWN

*"...culminates more than 30 years of careful examination of New Testament texts which offer some understanding of who Jesus was, what he did, and how much exactly he knew....*An Introduction to New Testament Christology *fulfills the expectations of anyone who has known previous writings of Raymond E. Brown."*

John F. O'Grady
–Praying



"...brings together the fruits of [Fr. Brown's] insights in a condensed, utterly accessible way. Ideal for those reading the Bible by themselves, in study groups, college courses or a beginning theology program...."

–Catholic Book Club
America Magazine

Paper $9.95
Available from your bookstore or Paulist Press
997 Macarthur Blvd., Mahwah, N.J. 07430 1-201-825-7300

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The 'People': Victims or villains?

ARROGANT CAPITAL
Washington, Wall Street, and the Frustrations of American Politics
Kevin Phillips
Little Brown, $22.95, 248 pp.

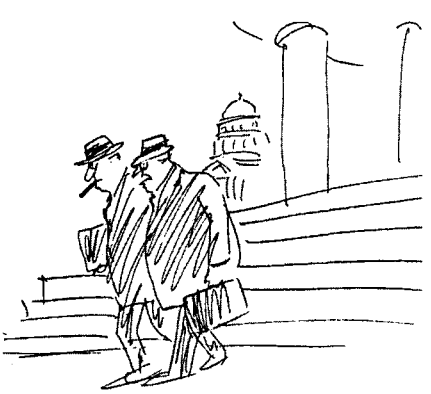
DEMOSCLEROSIS
The Silent Killer of American Government
Jonathan Rauch
Times Books, $22, 260 pp.

Timothy A. Byrnes

For a number of years analysts of American government argued that the stalemates and blockages that characterized the legislative and policy processes in Washington were the result of divided government, a circumstance in which one party controlled the presidency and another controlled Congress. Bill Clinton's election was supposed to change all that. Party government, Clinton argued during the campaign, would break the gridlock of Washington and get the country moving again on long-neglected domestic problems. Of course, it hasn't worked out quite that way. Clinton has had some legislative success and has at times enjoyed the support of his party in Congress. But just as often it seems that the Democratic president, faced with the Democratic Congress, has had to engage in the same kind of house-to-house combat with congressional barons that bedeviled his Republican predecessors.

In his new book, Kevin Phillips sets out to explain why gridlock and the stalemates of American government cannot be cured simply by the imposition of party government. The American government, he argues, has been taken over by a new class of parasites. Lawyer-lobbyists and other special-interest pleaders have proliferated wildly and turned Washington, D.C., into a cosmopolitan capital (with French restaurants!), far out of touch with the common citizenry, and far too entrenched to allow for the kind of innovation and new directions the country desperately needs.

For Phillips, the genius of American politics has been the "bloodless revolutions" that have periodically come along to sweep the decks clear of tired leaders, played-out political coalitions, and outdated policies. "Watersheds" (political scientists will recognize them as "critical elections") have followed on catastrophes such as the Civil War and the depressions of the 1890s and 1930s and forged out of these tragedies new possibilities, new parties, and at the very least, new relationships between political institutions and the citizens they represent. Phillips argues that we are desperately in need of such a cleansing now, but that it is being prevented by the parasitic culture of Washington. "The people," he claims, know instinctively what needs to be done, but they are being thwarted by the "special interests" that defend the *status quo*, and the cultural and financial status they have derived from it, with great skill and even greater energy.



"The people elected us. Let them *take the blame."*

Phillips's solution to this problem is to allow the people to bypass the president, the Congress, and the political parties, all of which are controlled by the parasites, through the implementation of more direct democracy. Referenda on crucial issues of the day—and here one hears the echo of Ross Perot's call for national town meetings through interactive video—would allow policy to reflect the will of the people rather than the narrow interests of the parasites. Phillips has many other recommendations, but the heart of his argument is that since the parties cannot bring us to a new "watershed" we must allow the people, through new technologies, to do it for themselves directly.

Phillips has an excellent record as a political prognosticator, and one should always take seriously his sense of the state of American politics. Indeed, *Arrogant Capital* is chock full of the kind of pointed observations and well-aimed barbs for which Phillips is justly famous. The problem with his argument, however, is that in his zeal to identify with the populist frustrations of "the people" he has effectively absolved "the people" from playing any role whatever in creating the present mess in the first place. Is it really true, as Phillips seems to believe, that the people have been unwitting bystanders to all the changes that have taken place in American politics over the last fifty years? Didn't "the people" choose divided government over and over again in free and fair national elections? Didn't "the people" enthusiastically support the irresponsible fiscal policies of the Reagan era that caused the structural deficit Phillips so eloquently decries? Didn't "the people" decide they would rather view partisan politics as a television show scripted by admen rather than as a community-based activity requiring

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Do Unto Others So They Can Do For Themselves."

The Catholic Church's Campaign for Human Development gives poor and low-income Americans a chance to control their own lives. Since 1970, CHD has made grants of more than $200 million to hundreds of successful projects run by the poor. With CHD's help, they have:

- created affordable housing for families
- helped the unemployed find jobs
- supported neighborhood efforts to combat crime
- improved local schools in low-income areas
- started cooperative businesses

Your contribution to CHD will give America's poor what they need most—a chance to work together to build a better life for themselves.

Campaign For Human Development

The Catholic Church Working to End Poverty and Injustice in America.

For more information or to send a donation, write or call:
Campaign for Human Development
U.S. Catholic Conference
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20017-1194

1-800-946-4CHD

United States Catholic Conference

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

organization, planning, and thought? Didn't "the people" join organizations and groups in overwhelming numbers and then hire lawyer-lobbyists to protect their "special interest" at all costs? Phillips may be right that Washington has become an arrogant capital incapable of meaningful reform. But for a full account of the source of that problem *Arrogant Capital* must be read in conjunction with Jonathan Rauch's *Demosclerosis: The Silent Killer of American Government.*

Rauch distinguishes himself from Phillips immediately by noting in his opening chapter that "the people" in fact make up the interest groups at the heart of the problem. "We have met the special interests," Rauch writes with admirable clarity, "and they are us....The problem is not any kind of 'them.' It is not the political group you most despise, whoever that may be. It is you and me and many people like us." Rauch argues that America is suffering from "demosclerosis," a hardening of the arteries of American political life that has made it impossible for our political leaders, no matter how energetic or well-intentioned, to adapt to changing circumstances and new problems.

The problem, in short, is that interest groups defend government programs and financial transfers that have long outlived their original purpose or collective social value. As a result, new programs do not replace old ones. Rather, the new is added to the old in an increasingly unwieldy and even irrational edifice of tax breaks, set-asides, subsidies, and bureaucracies. The pathologies associated with demosclerosis are many. First of all, the government cannot really reform itself; reform comes if at all on the margins, never affecting the thousands of programs and subsidies that lie at the heart of the problem. Second, tremendous amounts of energy, talent, and capital go into cutting up an existing government-baked pie and away from private enterprise, innovation, and investment. And finally, policy paralysis, or gridlock if you will, sets in as a country which is arguably richer and more powerful than it has ever been finds that it "can't afford" universal health care, welfare reform, or any other social program anyone wants to name. We can afford it all and more, Rauch claims, but we can't afford those programs in addition to all the agricultural subsidies, commercial sweetheart deals, and middle-class welfare entitlements (tax deductions), that we the people are so assiduously defending.

Rauch's cure for demosclerosis is a tough one. Republicans, he says, should support higher taxes in the name of fiscal responsibility, and Democrats should support slashing government programs in the name of rationality and a responsible setting of priorities. And both should endorse experimentation and reform as the keys to good health for an ill, but still very resilient, polity. He is not optimistic that the cure will be applied, of course. But he is hopeful, at least, that the malady will be accurately diagnosed.

Rauch's argument, at its core, is really quite similar to Phillips's. Both authors hold that the American system is in desperate need of innovation and reform, and both hold that the necessary changes are being prevented by the entrenched power of special interests represented by a new parasite class of Washingtonians. The difference between the two, however, is more stark than the similarities. For Phillips, the people are the victims of the piece who must turn to new technologies and new political arrangements to reassert their control. For Rauch, the people are the problem. We have, he claims, become a nation of "expectant whiners," and our deep troubles, our demosclerosis, will not be cured until, both collectively and individually, we grow up, shape up, and give up our own special interests. □

FAMILY VINAIGRETTE

VINEGAR HILL
A. Manette Ansay
Viking, $21.95, 236 pp.

David Toolan

Welcome to the less charming side of Garrison Keillor country, 512 Vinegar Hill, home of Fritz and Mary-Margaret Grier. The site is a small, German-American Wisconsin town, dominated by the steeple of Saint Michael's Catholic Church, on the shores of Lake Michigan. From the outside there is nothing to single out this peaceful, pale-brick ranch from its almost identical neighbors on the block. But the house is haunted by a crime worthy of Medea.

As the novel opens, shortly after Thanksgiving in 1972, daughter-in-law Ellen Grier finds herself hoping for the kind of Christmas she knew in the noisy farmhouse of her childhood. It is not to be. She goes about setting the table, folding the pink napkins to look like tall, peaked hats, just the way her mother did when she wanted to dress up a meal. No one except Ellen's two children, ten-year-old Amy and six-year-old Bert, appreciates the gesture; her husband James is only embarrassed. ("Thirteen years ago, Ellen thought marriage meant love. Now she believes that marriage means need, and when the need isn't there, what comes next?"). The meal proceeds in stony silence. These are not happy campers.

The senior Griers' interior color scheme is the loudest sign that something is amiss: overwhelmingly pink, even the china and the stretch pants and polyester blouses that Mary-Margaret wears. The rooms are

"I'm looking for happiness. And don't give me any of that nonsense about love*!"*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

filled with knickknacks—china angels, statues of saints, small glass animals with beady eyes (a place for everything, everything in its place—and a taxing dusting job for Ellen, who is chief cook, cleaning lady, and her mother-in-law's unpaid nurse). Neither Fritz (at sixty) nor Mary-Margaret (at sixty-four) is old, but to Ellen the place "smells of old age, of pale gray skin and Ben Gay and many dry roasts and silent suppers." When Mary-Margaret looks at Ellen she sees only "James's mistake." Seeing Amy, she looks right through her. It only gradually creeps up on you that the prettifying pink, the doodads and the silence represent denial. The inhabitants at No. 512, as Psalm 69 puts it, are "sunk in the abysmal swamp where there is no foothold"—and Ellen must take long walks after dinner just to breathe.

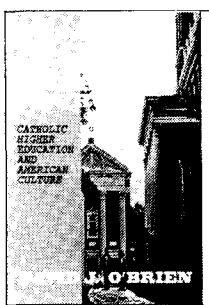
The still vigorously violent and miserly Fritz is retired from the hard life of a farmer and wants "some peace"—something he is not likely to get now that his unlucky son James, in a fugue state since he lost his job and home in Illinois, has moved in with his wife and children. Fritz stands a better chance of getting more peace than he bargains on from his wife, Mary-Margaret, who lies awake at night thinking of cutting his throat or cooking up a panful of poisonous iris leaves to pour into his coffee. The only reason Fritz escapes this fate is that Mary-Margaret fears the pains of Hell—where she is sure her beloved Mama has gone for an unpardonable sin of which no one in this household will speak. An unmarked grave out at the old farm testifies to the truth that Mary-Margaret has already had her revenge.

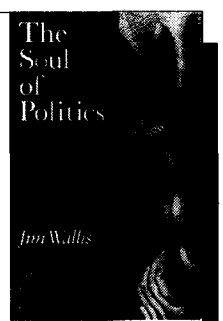
Vinegar Hill is a gothic mystery story, and the sleuth here is Ellen, who is trying to find her adult self while doing her duty as a good Catholic to be all things to the people around her: breadwinner, good mother, and loyal wife to the damaged, by now nearly mute James—who grew up in the shadow of his smart, athletic brother Mitch—now dead—and fears that Ellen "looks at him now as if he were an appliance she doesn't think can be fixed." He isn't wrong about Ellen's alienation from him—or his children's. What she wants, however—"a real conversation, one adult to another"—he cannot give; he has grown up in a looney bin and is slowly disintegrating, withdrawing into himself.

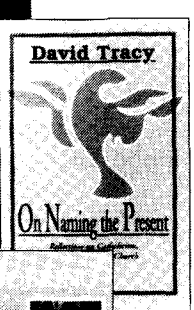
So Ellen must turn elsewhere for support, and as she makes the rounds in quest of it like some modern-day Job, the air is filled with the false pieties of Bildad, Zophar, and Eliphaz, showing just how far Catholic doctrine, in the right hands, can reinforce a sentence of death. Mary-Margaret's devout older, spinster sister, Salome, bolts the door; the parish priest, Father Bork, spouts platitudes ("If the fire in the hearth burns out, the family dies"); Ellen's own mother tells her to "lose weight," and her five older sisters advise that the key to a happy marriage and strong faith in God is: "Disguise yourself. Don't say what you feel." Only Ellen's divorced friend Barbara gives her pain a real hearing.

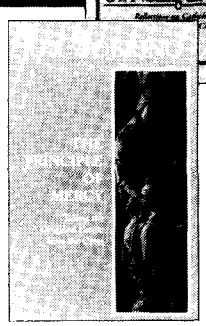
A faith that denies nature does not serve Ellen well. "She tries," we are told, "to feel the smugness of faith, to know that she is important and that life has great if hidden meaning. But the more she has tried to claim God, the more he has rejected her.

NEW
Church/World Perspectives









DAVID J. O'BRIEN
FROM THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN CHURCH
Catholic Higher Education and American Culture
Foreword by Archbishop Rembert Weakland
Proposes that the primary work of Catholic colleges is to foster a tradition that translates meaning and moral values into public practice.
$34.95 cloth, $14.95 paper

JIM WALLIS
THE SOUL OF POLITICS
A Practical and Prophetic Vision for Change
A clear and convincing call for a new political morality that combines social justice with personal responsibility. "Jim Wallis calls us with the prophetic voice of one living what he preaches . . . I pray our nation heeds his call."—**MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN**
$19.95 cloth

DAVID TRACY
ON NAMING THE PRESENT
God, Hermeneutics, and Church
Reveals new dimensions of Tracy's thought on such important topics as Catholicism, the mission of the church, and how a plurality of worldviews and hermeneutics affect the church's mission. $16.95 paper

YACOB TESFAI, editor
THE SCANDAL OF A CRUCIFIED WORLD
Perspectives on the Cross and Suffering
Powerful and poignant interpretations of the meaning of the cross today for the suffering millions—victims of hunger, war, and racism—and for Christians who seek to understand their faith. $16.95 paper

JON SOBRINO
THE PRINCIPLE OF MERCY
Taking the Crucified People from the Cross
Writing from the Salvadoran context, Sobrino reflects on the principles of mercy and solidarity as the mode of Christian witness and discipleship in a world of conflict and suffering. $16.95 paper

At bookstores or from
ORBIS BOOKS
Dept. CW5, Box 302
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302
MC/VISA 1-800-258-5838

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She wants to be lost in him, but he vomits her out again and again, and each time he asks more from her before he permits her return.... There is too much of Ellen in Ellen for God; she sticks in his throat like a bone...."

I'm not sure how the omniscient narrator intends such lines. A "smug" faith (according to Flannery O'Connor the besetting sin of Catholics) that aspires to be "lost in God" is what nearly all in this tight-knit, patriarchal town seems to have at the tip of their tongues, which leads this reader to the conclusion that when Ellen's God "vomits" her forth into the world he does her a distinct favor. Too much Ellen in Ellen for God? Rather, it seems her fierce God is expelling her from the "abysmal swamp" nearly everyone else sees as a woman's lot in this vale of tears.

Ansay is too perceptive a writer to single out benighted Fritz as the sole villain in this family feud; this is warfare in which mothers resort to terrorist attack—at which precocious little Amy is already honing her skills. What is going on here is a tradition of master-slave relations whose machinery spits out executioner-victims with each succeeding generation—thin-skinned daughters who suppress their rage, hate their own femininity, and devour their sons (Mary-Margaret), smart daughters who escape into isolation (Salome), macho sons who turn into the brutes their fathers were (Mitch), sensitive sons who cannot be touched, who turn into zombies (James). If Ellen doesn't make a decisive break with this malign legacy, she will be condemning her daughter Amy to become another Mary-Margaret or Salome, her timid son Bert to become another James. She must unravel the catechism she learned as a child. But where, since she cannot go it alone, will she acquire the strength to break free? You will be surprised, I think. Like the good Catholic she thinks she is not, her resource lies in communing with the powerful dead—even lost souls in Hell.

Vinegar Hill, a first novel, has all the makings for a thinly disguised feminist polemic. That it is nothing of the sort is due to Ansay's ability to draw us deeply inside her characters and set them at odds, in one compelling, grotesquely comic scene after another. This is a stunning debut by a writer to watch. □

MAURA, WE HARDLY KNEW YE

PURE HEART, ENLIGHTENED MIND
The Zen Journals of Maura "Soshin" O'Halloran
Tuttle, $18, 313 pp.

Paul Elie

Commonweal readers already know of Maura O'Halloran, whose mother, Ruth O'Halloran, wrote about her daughter's life in an essay published here in 1992 (February 28). A scholarship student at Trinity College, Dublin who "early gave promise of a rare spirituality," Maura O'Halloran left a waitressing job in Harvard Square at age twenty-three to begin an apprenticeship as a Buddhist monk at a zendo in Japan. There too she showed uncommon gifts early on: she glimpsed enlightenment almost immediately and solved koans with the aplomb of a veteran Zen master. She stayed at the zendo for most of two years, resolved to "not stop until I reach complete enlightenment." In 1982, intending to return to her family in Dublin, she had set out on a trip through Asia when she was killed in a bus accident in Thailand. Since then "Maura-san," or "Soshin"—celebrated during her lifetime in the Japanese media as an anomaly of anomalies, a female Irish Zen monk—has come to be regarded as a Buddhist *bodhisattva* or saint of compassion.

Now, prompted by the *Commonweal* article, Tuttle & Co. has published the journal Maura O'Halloran kept while at the monastery, along with letters she wrote to her family and a series of delicate, lovely drawings by her younger sister, Elizabeth. Together they form a remarkable record of a life fully lived, a unique and inspiring and even heartbreaking book.

On one level Maura's journal is an account of her determined progress toward Zen enlightenment. In an afterword, the American Zen monk Patricia Dai-En Bennage sees it as a "record of a pure heart" (*soshin*) and a summary of her way, or teaching: "intense meditation, known as zazen, for long hours in natural temperatures, full-voice chanting, sustaining oneself on the minimum necessary sleep and food, and working single-mindedly under the guidance of a master, or Roshi." Maura vividly tells of the familiar aspects of life of prayer and asceticism in a monastic community: her early ardor; her friendships and conflicts with the other monks (one proposed marriage); her efforts to reconcile the small defeats of cooking and begging with her deepening experience of the sublime in prayer; and her passionate relationship with her master, Go Roshi, who was ill with cancer and hoped that Maura, his "jewel," would stay in Japan and succeed him as the zendo's spiritual leader.

Read straight through, the book can be hard going. It is a journal, after all, and its author instinctively avoids the facile devices typically used to present Zen to Western readers. Maura doesn't hold our hands as an anthropological observer, set herself up as a spiritual guide, or offer her experience as a lesson in what the West must learn from the East.

That is why the journal is so remarkable. Like Virginia Woolf in her diaries or Elizabeth Bishop in her letters, Maura O'Halloran appears on the page singular and whole. So *this* is a person! She is a Zen monk, yes, but she is also a splendidly educated Irish-American from a large and loving family, intellectually ambitious, attractive and attracted to men of all sorts, hungry for the world's goods. These aspects of herself fulfill one another rather than cancel each other out.

While it is called *Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind*, the book is full of Maura's *soul*. From her first letter to her family, it is clear that hers is no pious, edifying story: "Well, the luck of the Irish stayed intact across the international dateline, and I'm doing great. Sure and begorra, let me tell you the tricks." Maura's wit and so-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cial observation remain sharp as she plunges into the monastic experience. Upon her arrival, she is puzzled by the way she is welcomed like a relative: "At one luncheon it was decided that I had a Japanese face. Of course my face is as Irish as turf but it's all part of their acceptance of me. Several people have said that I don't seem Western. [In South America] they said I seemed Latin. *Quien sabe*?" Traveling to Seoul, she feels oddly indulged: "The customs inspectors, of course, only bowed and waved me on, delighted with the *gaijin* [foreign] monk. The money-changers, too, were charming. With robes and a shaved head is the only way to travel." Given an exotic carved chin-rest full of Buddhist symbolism, she reflects: "Holding it in my hands, I feel a sort of reverence for all the hard training that has gone before. However, that didn't do me much good last night. It's hard to sleep on the bloody thing."

Naturally enough, she applies her wit and insight to her spiritual life as well. "I'm blowing through the koans these days," she writes in a late letter to her mother. "Phew! My head is spinning a bit." Frustrated after a twenty-hour day of work and prayer, she tells herself, "Keep at it, m'dear."

The journal itself is personal, sometimes abstruse, but rarely myopic; as a writer, Maura O'Halloran can't help but communicate. It is complemented perfectly by the letters to her family interspersed throughout. In them she is unusually confident and clear-headed about her search for enlightenment. She makes no apologies, gives no defenses. In going East she seems not to have been in flight from home and family; no, she is zealous to share her experience as fully as possible with her mother, her grandmother, her five brothers and sisters. In William James's terms, she seems to have been not twice-born but once-born, her mature religious life continuous with the early life and culture that gave rise to it.

When she died in Thailand, Maura had just traveled to Hong Kong and Macao with her brother Scott. She intended to return to Dublin, to undertake plans that had taken shape during her time in the zendo. She might have earned a Ph.D. in linguistics at the Sorbonne, or founded a zendo in Dublin, or completed a novel she had begun in the monastery. She might have married.

Without denying the Zen character of her experience and the way it was fostered in Japan, one can't help but regret that a person so conversant in the Western culture of her upbringing had to leave it in order to seek enlightenment. Sure, we have our monasteries and convents—but the mystical way is in abeyance in Christianity today, and the impulse to follow a regimen of prayer as a stage on life's way runs counter to the lifetime commitments required of "professed religious." In this way perhaps Maura and the East have something to teach the West after all. How sad I felt as I finished this book, which I will read again: sad that Maura O'Halloran didn't survive to return and enrich our culture, and sad that she had to go away from us in the first place. □

DISCIPLES AND DEMOCRACY

Religious Conservatives and the Future of American Politics

Edited by MICHAEL CROMARTIE

The religious right, currently the subject of intense press attention, is here scrutinized by both insiders and outside observers. Journalists **Fred Barnes** (*The New Republic*), **Michael Barone** (*U.S. News & World Report*), and **E. J. Dionne** (*Washington Post*), activists **Ralph Reed** (Christian Coalition) and **Michael Farris**, and scholarly analysts **John Green**, **Allen Hertzke**, **Michael Horowitz**, **Richard Land**, and **George Weigel** examine the agenda of religious conservatives, their influence upon the 1992 election, and whether and how they can increase their political influence in the next four years. In a foreword, **Irving Kristol** calls religious conservatives "the very core of an emerging American conservatism." The volume, published jointly by the Ethics and Public Policy Center and Eerdmans, includes brief comments by eighteen other informed observers as well. **147 pages, paper, $12.99** ■ ISBN 0-8028-0847-6

"The rise of the religious conservatives is a hot topic, and this is an indispensable study and critique. A lively, solid, and serious piece of work."
— MICHAEL NOVAK, American Enterprise Institute

"A highly thought-provoking and well-balanced introduction to a subject that is not just difficult but combustible." — CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, syndicated columnist

Available in bookstores or from:
ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER
1015 15th Street N.W., #900 ■ Washington, D.C. 20005 ■ (202) 682-1200

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DR. JOHNSON'S NEW BOSWELL

DR. JOHNSON AND MR. SAVAGE
Richard Holmes
Pantheon Books, $23, 272 pp.

Edward T. Wheeler

At the very end of his *Dr. Johnson and Mr. Savage* Richard Holmes points out that a reader should hear an echo in the title; the echo is *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. This teasing revelation works very well by summation: the pairing of light and dark, the split self, Apollo and Dionysus. To outward appearances, Johnson, the Great Cham, judicious lexicographer, moral essayist, and critic works as a Dr. Jekyll. Savage, a murderer saved by royal decree, notorious poet, and self-proclaimed "artificial bastard," certainly is a Mr. Hyde. Holmes's study sets as its central question why the two men should be so closely linked, for undoubtedly as a young man Johnson had a profoundly affecting relationship with the older Savage. Upon the latter's death in debtors' prison two years after they met, Johnson wrote *The Life of Richard Savage* which Holmes reckons to be the first modern biography, the book that created the genre.

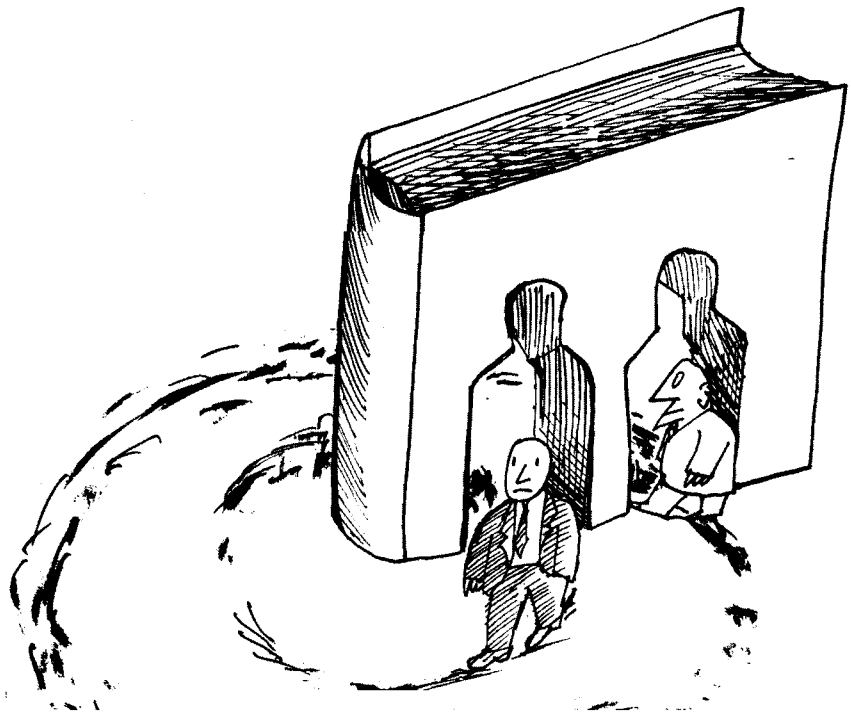
This Jekyll and Hyde pairing, the source of a "new hybrid, no-fiction form of enormous energy and potential," also gives the highly successful biographer Richard Holmes a chance to, as he says, write the biography of biography. "I believe," Holmes asserts, "that biography itself, with its central tenet of empathy, is essentially a Romantic form; and that Johnson's friendship with Savage first crystallized its perils and its possibilities."

So we have two strands in this extraordinary book, parallel lives offering revisionist views of both Savage and Johnson, and an analysis of the limits of biography, an oblique but persuasive demonstration of the role of the biographer as opposed to that of the novelist.

But first the facts: Richard Savage (1698?-1743), poet, playwright, and self-proclaimed illegitimate son of the fourth Earl Rivers, was tried and condemned to hang for the murder of a man in a tavern brawl. His court case must have attracted the attention of the London literati in the way that O.J. Simpson's has attracted prime-time America today. He was lionized by society after gaining a royal pardon and became a very lucrative literary property, especially in those works in which he attacked his mother, Lady Macclesfield, for denying him recognition. In an age of wits, he supplied to Pope the more salacious bits of Grub Street gossip for "The Dunciad." Besides Pope, he could claim James Thomson and Edward Young among his poet friends. In including Savage's life among *The Lives of English Poets*, Johnson placed Savage beside Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and their like.

Savage eventually alienated every patron who offered him protection and estranged most publishers by failing to meet contract deadlines. He was finally "pensioned off" in what was to be a retreat to rustic Wales, but in inimitable form he squandered his payments on drink and other dissipation and wound up dying in debtors' prison in Bristol. He befriended his jailer just as he had charmed virtually everyone who felt the attraction of his powerful personality. To the end he berated those who did not support him for their failure to treat him as was his due, just as he reviled them for their offers of charity. Holmes warmly compliments Savage's modern editor and biographer, Clarence Tracy (*The Artificial Bastard*, 1953, *Poetical Works*, 1962) and uses Tracy's research to bring to bear evidence suppressed by or unavailable to Johnson. He also tells a far better story than Tracy as he establishes that Savage was not simply a son maimed by a cruel mother, but a manipulative self-propagandist who was able to bully or charm his way into a position which he felt he deserved.

The Savage that Johnson presents is, however, the central figure in a moral allegory: a gifted outcast challenging society's hypocritical morality—he is passionate in his attacks on the slave trade and the genocidal effects of taking civilization to the colonies—and offering in his poetic vision



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a form of truth accessible only to the artist. Holmes would have Johnson in 1744 identifying all the traits of the Romantic "unacknowledged legislator" in Savage. The evidence quoted from Savage's poems more than justifies the claim that, despite the heroic couplets, Savage had a Romantic sensibility as much as he had a Byronic lifestyle.

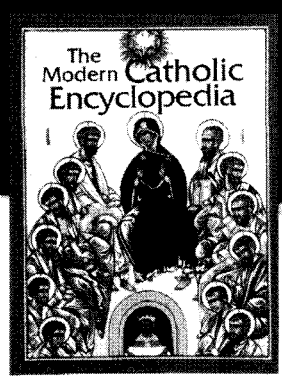
Moving from chapter to chapter, a reader becomes aware that Holmes proceeds by a marshaling of evidence from different perspectives and so presents a series of corrective readings. We end with a less simple, far more human understanding of both characters; the judiciousness of the reading is the biographer's warning: this is not fiction.

Holmes would make as brilliant a lawyer as he is a biographer; the two vocations meet their natural intersection in the book's most entertaining chapter, one which reconstructs the events which led up to Savage's murder of one James Sinclair. The recorded testimony of each of the witnesses, the examining physician's report, and the finer points of the etiquette of sword play fall together seamlessly; this is imagination working within the constraints of corroborating evidence. The obligations devolving from Savage's sense of himself as "the son of the late Earl Rivers" go far to explain why he acted as he did and offer a far more convincing defense, at least to a modern reader's ears, than that presented by Johnson in his *Life*. The recreation of the events of the murder and the analysis of the motives which drove Savage to kill are striking object lessons in the art of biography.

Holmes, who has received high critical praise for his books on Shelley and Coleridge, investigates the art that he practices with little sense of weighty theory. His autobiographical *Early Visions* (1987) conveyed a giddy sense of vertigo as he bounced down a Cumbrian hillside with Coleridge. The sense of the vertiginous is never distant in *Dr. Johnson and Mr. Savage*, but the vertigo comes more by way of the mirror-like structure of the book: a Savage whom Holmes deftly reconstructs is placed against the Savage Johnson created in his biography. The differences in the reflection yield a different image of Johnson. In the same way that Holmes used the documented evidence of the trial to piece together the events of the brawl and to derive from them a satisfying sense of Savage's motivation, he brings Johnson's rhetoric to testify to a man whom Johnson's great biographer, Boswell, never knew. He takes Johnson's advocacy of his friend as evidence of Johnson's motivation and offers us a psychological understanding of Johnson's devotion to Savage.

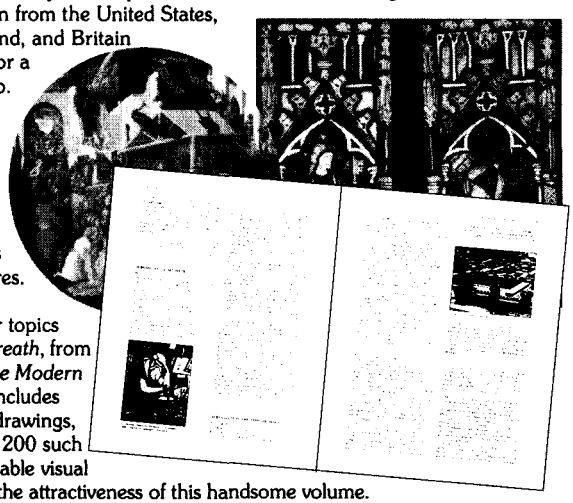
We are also reminded that Johnson was affected by a tubercular infection passed on by his wet nurse which left him partly blind, disfigured, and almost convulsive in movement. The Great Doctor might have been a curmudgeon wielder of verbal clubs, but as a young man he was desperate for friendship and dismally mismatched in marriage. Holmes traces Johnson's movements to London: he was a failed school teacher and struggling journalist clearly charmed by the worldly, gracious, and ambivalently attractive Savage. Johnson was sympathetic to his anti-establishment politics and perhaps

The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia



Michael Glazier and Monika K. Hellwig, Editors

This authoritative encyclopedia combines a wealth of information with an attractive, easy-to-read format for a reference of value to professionals, parishes, and families alike. It is edited for readers in English-speaking countries, drawn together by a common language and by shared pastoral concerns and challenges. Consequently men and women from the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and Britain have written this work for a multinational readership. Its topics and themes have been chosen to meet the inquiries and religious curiosity of people today; therefore emphasis is given to contemporary concerns and contemporary figures.



Over 1,300 cross-referenced entries cover topics from *abbot* to *Advent wreath*, from *abortion* to *vocation*. *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia* includes black-and-white maps, drawings, and photographs. Over 200 such illustrations provide valuable visual information and add to the attractiveness of this handsome volume.

A full-color sixteen-page section depicts the life of Jesus in sacred art from the tenth century to the present.

5495-9 Hardcover, 976 pp., 8 1/2 x 11, $69.95

Rights: World except E.C.

THE LITURGICAL PRESS
P.O. Box 7500, Collegeville, MN 56321-7500

Available at your local religious bookstore, or order toll free:
Phone 1-800-858-5450 • Fax 1-800-445-5899

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

desperate to escape through him the hopeless marriage he had contracted. "Tetty" Johnson was twenty years her husband's senior and Holmes suggests that Johnson's reaction to the much older woman was one reason he so warmly took to Savage's vilification of his mother. But Holmes also allows us to see that Johnson's advocacy of Savage did not blind him to the flaws in his personality; he never confused the "love of a friend with the judgment of a biographer" and could write in the *Life* that Savage "was morally incapable of friendship in its true sense." It is this legacy that Holmes reflects in the elegant description of the art he practices: it is possessed of "the kind of human truth, poised between fact and fiction, which a biographer can obtain as he tells the story of another's life, and thereby makes it both his own (like a friendship) and the public's (like a betrayal). It asks what we can know, and what we can believe, and finally what we can love."

Johnson, reflecting on the nature of biography in his *Rambler No. 60* essay, noted that every life carefully examined will witness something universally recognizable: "We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure." He also reckoned that "more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative." Richard Holmes manages to strike the Johnsonian balance between broad observation and piquant detail. He writes no bastard version of biography. Although he has a great deal to say about the demise of the patronage system and the rise of the tribe of writers, those who are not "blockheads," and who scratch their pens for money, he is not primarily concerned with social history. We can hear the true descent of his work in his closing comments in which he sees himself trailing, both as a researcher and as a friend, the two conspiring figures of Johnson and Savage, "talking and arguing through a labyrinth of dark night streets, trying to find a recognizable human truth together." We are lucky to have Holmes as our Sherlock and guide. □

A WOMAN OF PARTS

TRUE NORTH
Jill Ker Conway
Alfred A. Knopf, $23, 250 pp.

Madeline Marget

This second volume of Jill Ker Conway's memoirs is an instructive, and often vivid, travelogue of her experience, and of her knowledge and ideas. It begins where *The Road from Coorain* left off, at the time of the author's leaving Australia for the United States in 1960, and ends in 1975, as she is about to assume the presidency of Smith College. The decade-and-a-half she writes about was an intense time for the contemporary women's movement, and a period of striking development and change in Conway's life. The huge amount of material it encompasses is both the strength of the book and its weakness.

Conway's subject is her life and the lives of women who, like her, have had to move beyond their sphere and training to realize their high ambitions. Her thesis, first explored in her doctoral dissertation, is that successful women use direct, complex, well-thought-out methods for achieving their goals, but that when they report on their achievements they often, even habitually, disguise what is likely to be the socially unacceptable sight of their drive and planning, thereby falsifying to other people, and perhaps to themselves, the means of their accomplishments.

Oddly, however, Conway attributes many of the positive turns in her own life to serendipity. She meets and charms one of Canada's greatest philanthropists because she happens to sit next to him at a party; she does not anticipate how timely and popular her choice to center her scholarship on women would be and is surprised at the attention she receives. Adding to the unreality is her representation of people she likes as essentially flawless. They are witty, kind, exceptionally bright, talented, and generous—never the cause of their own, or anyone else's, misfortune. Similarly, Conway's choices are almost always wise, and her conduct is not only irreproachable, but highly admirable. I believe that in her self-portrait, at least, she is accurate—she once took considerable trouble to do a favor for me, a complete stranger—but the unalleviated virtue of her story and her companions left me wondering what enlightenment a fuller rendering of dark times, and especially of the struggle against them, might have given.

Nevertheless, her portraits of the events, settings, and people in her life radiate her own happiness, and yield clear, memorable views. When she arrives in Cambridge to begin her graduate work at Harvard she immediately (and luckily, in her telling) meets women who are to become life-long friends, and with whom she shares a vigorous, secure, intellectual, and emotional life. Before long, she meets her future husband, an erudite, sophisticated scholar and war hero, and after a passionate courtship, marries him. The wedding is romantic and elegant; the year-long working honeymoon is in England and Italy. After that, there are jobs

"Congratulations. It's a liberated woman!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for both of them in Toronto.

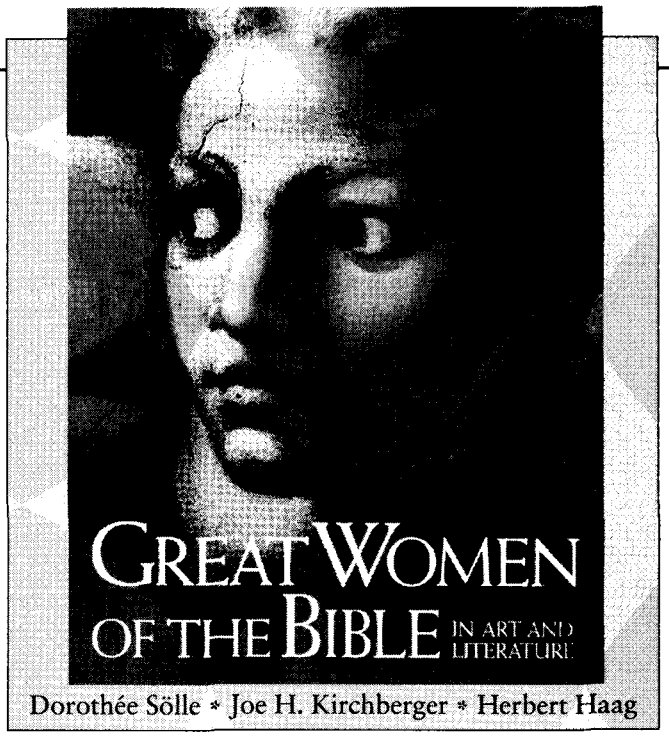
In her personal life as an adult, Conway has suffered three major—and ongoing—blows. Her husband John suffers from severe depression that at least once required a long hospitalization. Conway says that she marks her maturity from the time when she discovered that despite her great love for him—he is her compass, the "true north" of the title—she could be only a companion, not a cure, for him.

Though she had not wanted to marry until she met John (and says she did not think of marrying him until he asked), once married she did long for children. She was unable to have them, however, because she suffered from endometriosis, so severe that she was wracked with pain each month—pain that Australian doctors had dismissed as psychosomatic, a result of her unmarried, childless state.

Her third serious problem was also an outgrowth, at least in part, of sexism. Conway's mother, an energetic, intelligent woman, wholly admirable in the first half of *The Road from Coorain*, becomes almost evil—bitter, idle, self-centered, and consumed by a desire to own her children. Though in *True North* she doesn't succeed in breaking their marriages or careers in her effort to possess Conway and her brother, she'd like to. Grief (at the loss of her husband and son) and perhaps character play a part in the transformation of her personality, but the idle, mannered, often chemically tranquilized conditions of an upper-middle-class woman's life in a conservative society are the great cause of harm to her, and through her, to her family. The contrast between the damage her repressed energy does, and the good Conway's actions do, is the most important lesson of the book.

There are others. When her activities are clearly political, especially when they're conducted to advance her career, Conway tells how she did it in straightforward, educational terms. When she realizes that she's not being promoted or paid as her male peers at the University of Toronto are, she takes quick and effective steps to gain justice. She stands up for order in student demonstrations, constructs a course on women, learns a compelling extemporaneous lecturing style, helps other women gain support and advance, and becomes an effective administrator through cool thinking, hard work, and clear ethics. Most of the time she gives enough detail so it would be possible to follow her path—if one had her energy and intelligence (and, maybe, a little of her luck).

The book is too brisk, though, to adequately do justice to Conway's thinking or her eye. The many conclusions in *True North* come too quickly, as if Conway already—and off-stage—has participated in disputatious discussion and is now the only one left talking. In her academic and administrative work, and in the other books she's written for a general audience, Conway's done much good. The observation and instruction in *True North* are part of that accomplishment, but more, or more open, reflection and introspection would make the worlds she presents to readers more accessible. I hope Conway's future work not only continues the life she writes about in this book, but also enlarges on it. □



Dorothée Sölle * Joe H. Kirchberger * Herbert Haag

Throughout history the women of the Bible have figured prominently in a great wealth of occidental art and have inspired important themes in world literature, fables, legends, songs, and folk stories. This beautiful volume shows how these great women, from Eve to Mary, are portrayed in art and literature from the early Christian period to the present day.

The full-color illustrations, which include photographs of sculptures, frescoes, panels, miniatures, and modern graphics, are accompanied by detailed captions that clarify the particular vision of each artist represented. Complementing each sequence of illustrations are carefully chosen texts from the Bible and from other sources such as Coptic literature, the Talmud, the Koran, and the treasury of religious legends. Further texts are drawn from works of literature by writers such as Dante, Goethe, Thomas Mann, Gustave Flaubert, and Oscar Wilde. Each chapter includes critical commentary by Dorothée Sölle, who has taken special care to interpret the biblical text for the modern reader.

This stunning book will fascinate a wide range of readers, particularly those whose interests include art, literature, biblical studies, the humanities, or the role of women throughout history.

Fully illustrated * 9 3/4" X 13" 296 pages * ISBN 0-8028-3769-7 * Cloth * $75.00

At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521 FAX 616-459-6540

502 WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

E PLURIBUS, PLURES

DICTATORSHIP OF VIRTUE
Multiculturalism and the Battle for America's Future
Richard Bernstein
Alfred A. Knopf, $25, 367 pp.

Robert F. Worth

Multiculturalism, at first glance, appears to posit a happy playground where everyone is included, regardless of race, creed, or color. In practice, it often means the imposition of a bland, Benetton International version of world culture, with all the gritty details nicely bleached and Americanized. In between these two poles lurks the stubborn reality of any given culture, with all its natural conservatism, its taboos and intolerance. Multiculturalism, therefore, is not an easy subject for tactful discussion; strong opinions can always be reduced to the ethnocentric or political bias of the speaker. Richard Bernstein's awareness of this danger shows up in every page of *Dictatorship of Virtue*. He makes a full confession of his personal and political biases, and he maintains a sober independence from that ideological food-fight know as the Culture Wars. He tempers his critique of multiculturalist orthodoxy with professions of faith in some sort of renewed and balanced pluralism.

Nonetheless, Bernstein's argument is familiar. He is convinced that multiculturalism has become "the dominant ideology of the late twentieth century"; and his evidence consists, for the most part, of anecdotes in which liberal educators and activists impose a shallow orthodoxy of "sensitivity" and "diversity," jeopardizing truth, careers, and our national committment to unity. Although Bernstein, who was for several years a cultural correspondent for the *New York Times*, writes about newspapers, high schools, churches, and municipalities as well as universities, his views are sympathetic with the attacks made against the academy in recent years by conservatives such as Allan Bloom, Dinesh D'Souza, and Roger Kimball. It is no accident that his title is adapted from Robespierre, the architect of the Terror. For Bernstein, multiculturalism as it is currently practiced is a tragic perversion of the liberal impulse, a pluralism turned awry. He makes this claim effectively where the academy is concerned, showing how the language of liberal inclusiveness has often led to an exclusive orthodoxy. But for Bernstein these excesses are more than mere jiggles of the scale in an evolving dialogue on politics and education. They are symptoms of a national loss of faith in the assimilationist ideal, with dire (though vague) consequences for the American future.

Bernstein devotes many pages to controversies at the University of Texas and the University of Pennsylvania, where what should have been minor incidents involving race and the curriculum became lengthy battles, damaging careers and further polarizing the environment at both institutions. Sometimes it is hard to know whether the rhetoric of multiculturalism is the cause of such disputes—as Bernstein argues—or merely a symptom of administrative incompetence. Often it appears to be a bit of both.

Bernstein insists, however, that these tendencies are present and powerful outside of education as well. He describes corporate "diversity training" sessions that crowd out true diversity of opinion and inculcate a simple-minded view of racial and ethnic diversity. He demystifies the alleged "massive increase in hate crimes" in recent years by showing that in at least one city (Saint Paul, Minnesota) the statistics on hate crime are subject to manipulation and have only been recorded in recent years anyway. Such studies, Bernstein argues, are "more a consequence than a cause of multicultural doctrine." He may well be right; but his findings do not amount, in my mind, to the discovery of a "dominant ideology." It is certainly true that Columbus did not enjoy the same joyous national celebration in 1992 as he did a hundred years previously. But that does not mean, as Bernstein argues, that the politics of difference have triumphed over

"I might ask you the same question."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the politics of equality.

Multiculturalism is often invoked in the mainstream press in the context of immigration. The country, according to the common wisdom, is undergoing a massive "browning"; by the twenty-first century, whites of European descent will no longer be the majority. These facts are often given as a justification for bilingual town meetings or for changing the literary canon, as though demographic change necessarily implied cultural change. This kind of "diversity," Bernstein rightly argues, "negates the very existence of a common culture valid for all of us who are already here." And that is particularly odd, because most of the immigrants who arrived at Ellis Island a hundred years ago knew less about America than those arriving today; yet they embraced their "Americanization" eagerly and successfully. Bernstein attributes our current loss of faith in the power of the "melting pot" to the national disillusionment of Vietnam and Watergate. Those events, he reminds us, formed the political baptism of most Americans now in their thirties and forties; and it is easy to feel gloomy about what such cynicism will breed in the years ahead. But a longer historical view would help to alleviate the gloom. Ever since the revolution, America's almost constant social and political transformations have elicited prophecies of doom, some of them far more eloquent than Bernstein's; but somehow the country always manages—like New York City—to totter on from year to year.

Bernstein ends his book by insisting, somewhat vaingloriously, that "it takes no bravery to be a multiculturalist." They control the academy, the grants, the liberal press—therefore they control the country. That inference, made repeatedly in the book, is unconvincing. It may take no bravery to be a multiculturalist, but it doesn't take much bravery to be a critic of multiculturalism either, unless you happen to be an English professor at a liberal university. There are plenty of journalists and critics who like nothing better than bashing multiculturalism, and they will greet Bernstein's book with ardor. One can only hope that they will also honor his noble intention: to reclaim multiculturalism, not to abandon it. □

REVIEWERS

TIMOTHY A. BYRNES *teaches political science at Colgate University. His latest book,* Abortion Politics in American States, *coedited with Mary Segers, will be published later this year.*

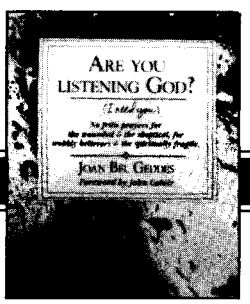
DAVID TOOLAN *is associate editor of* America *magazine and director of the Catholic Book Club.*

PAUL ELIE *is a frequent* Commonweal *contributor.*

EDWARD T. WHEELER *is dean of the faculty at the Williams School in New London, Connecticut.*

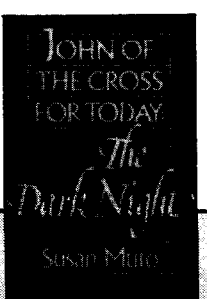
MADELINE MARGET, *a regular* Commonweal *contributor, is author of* Life's Blood *(Simon & Schuster).*

ROBERT F. WORTH *is a graduate student in English at Princeton University.*

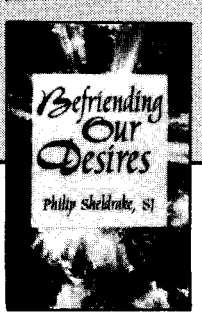


FALL 1994

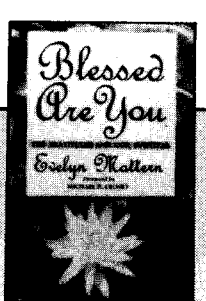
ARE YOU LISTENING GOD?
(I NEED YOU)
Joan Bel Geddes
Prayers of comfort and support for the spiritually fragile — from skeptical searchers bordering on non-belief to devout believers who suddenly find their faith wavering and wobbly.
0-87793-533-5 *July* **184 pages, $7.95**



JOHN OF THE CROSS FOR TODAY:
THE DARK NIGHT
Susan Muto
A companion to Muto's previously published ***The Ascent,*** this readable interpretation and commentary on this 16th century masterpiece makes John's spiritual wisdom accessible to today's readers.
0-87793-532-7 *August* **320 pages, $9.95**



BEFRIENDING OUR DESIRES
Philip Sheldrake, S.J.
Explores the intimate association between spirituality and desire. Invites the reader to reflect on the nature of human desire in relation to prayer, discernment and spiritual growth.
0-87793-536-X *September* **136 pages, $6.95**



BLESSED ARE YOU
THE BEATITUDES AND OUR SURVIVAL
Evelyn Mattern
In the midst of our harsh and volatile world, Mattern shows how the practice of the beatitudes in our everyday lives guides us in the ways of peace and compassion.
0-87793-534-3 *September* **160 pages, $7.95**

Order from your local religious bookstore or from:
AVE MARIA PRESS NOTRE DAME, INDIANA 46556
Phone: 1-800-282-1865 • FAX: 1-800-282-5681
In Canada: Order from your local bookstore or B. Broughton Co., Ltd., Toronto

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Women & spirituality

Lawrence S. Cunningham

Elizabeth Dreyer takes up a subject which has been of interest to many in recent years: how to speak about spirituality (by which, in general, she means the living of the Christian life) while being sensitive to the historical tradition of Christian spirituality and yet not collapsing contemporary forms into the older "states of perfection" (that is, the monastic, mendicant, religious literature of the past). She is in the good company of many current writers who attempt to write on spirituality while being sensitive to our inherited tradition while providing adequate descriptions of our common human experience.

Dreyer's method is to reflect seriously as a theologian (she teaches at the Washington Theological Union) on the ordinary life of people. That leads her to adopt the twofold strategy reflected in her book. In part 1, she argues for ordinary experience as a locus for the sacred. Her theological focus is on the role of the Holy Spirit in a world which is created and in which we have experienced the Incarnation. In part 2, she takes up thematic aspects of the ordinary (work, sexuality, a revisioned worldly asceticism, the marketplace, etc.) based on the implications of the theological foundations established in part 1. In these latter chapters two themes serve as a bass note: (1) a rejection of the dichotomy between action and contemplation; (2) the ubiquity of God's presence ("grace is everywhere") in the created/sustained world.

Earth Crammed with Heaven: A Spirituality of Everyday Life, *by Elizabeth Dreyer, Paulist, $11.95. 186 pp.*

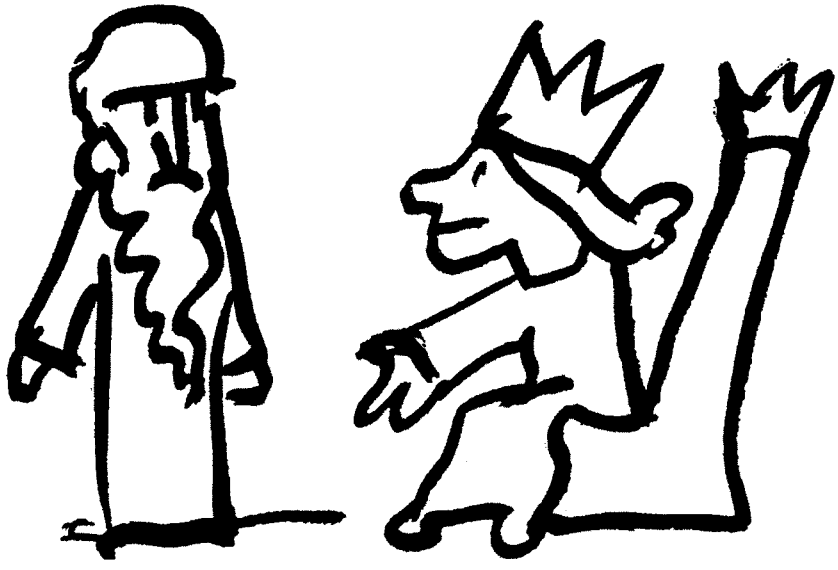
I am very much taken with Dreyer's approach. Those who have a serious interest in spirituality should find this a quite useful work. Since the book focuses primarily on a description of ordinary experience within the framework of theology, it might well be read it in tandem with Luke Timothy Johnson's excellent *Faith's Freedom: A Classic Spirituality for Ordinary Christians* (Fortress, 1990). Johnson's work is "thicker" theologically but oriented, like Dreyer's, toward the ordinary. Works like these make us confident that the time is ripe for someone to write a larger, more comprehensive, spirituality suitable for Christians living in anticipation of the approaching millennium.

Zagano's anthology is much too short to serve as a sole classroom text. As she notes in her preface, its origin was as a collection she used for reading texts out loud "to someone who came to me for advice or assistance...." There are brief selections from Dame Julian, Teresa of Avila, and other spiritual classics, as well as some very interesting surprises.

The late Carmelite poet, Jessica Powers, evidently corresponded with the activist nun, Margaret Ellen Traxler, SSND, during the 1960s. Zagano publishes a few of their letters, making one hope that if there is a large correspondence we will eventually see it in print. Likewise, Zagano has translated some of the correspondence of Mary Ward (1585-1645) whose attempt to found a religious order of women beyond the traditional pale of the cloister met with stern opposition (she fell under the power of the Inquisition for a time) in her own day. It was three centuries later that the institute she established could finally call Mary Ward its founder. The final four selections, all from this century, include Dorothy Day and Simone Weil, and two martyrs: Edith Stein (who died at Auschwitz) and Ita Ford (who was mar-

Woman to Woman: An Anthology of Women's Spiritualities, *by Phyllis Zagano, Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, $8.95, 115 pp.*

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM *teaches theology and chairs the department at the University of Notre Dame.*



"Is there, thinkest thou, any word from the Lord?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tyred in El Salvador in 1980).

Zagano concludes with a selected bibliography for each of the persons anthologized in the book. As befits a professor of communications (at Boston University), she appends the Library of Congress call number for each book in the bibliography; a nice touch that I have not seen before.

Dorothy Day has been the subject of some fine studies by William D. Miller (her authorized biographer) and Mel Piehl. To that list we can now add Merriman's book. Merriman focuses, as the subtitle indicates, on the sources and character of Day's luminous spiritual life. If there was ever a person nourished on the classic sources of spirituality, it was Dorothy Day. Deeply influenced by Benedictine monasticism, she loved both the liturgy of the hours and the Eucharist, the writings of the saints, and the great classics of the spiritual life. Furthermore, as Merriman documents, she was deeply marked by her lifelong engagement with the spiritual resources of the Eastern Christian tradition, nourished not only by her deep love for Tolstoy and Dostoevsky but through her friendship with the late Helene Iswolsky.

All of this is well known to any reader of Day's wonderful "On Pilgrimage" column which for years graced the pages of the *Catholic Worker*. What Merriman has done, however, is to thicken our understanding of the resources Day drew on. She probes deeply into Day's connection with Saint Procopius Abbey in Illinois where she fed both her interest in Byzantine Christianity and her love for things monastic. There is also a very fine chapter on Day's enthusiastic support for the retreat movement developed by the late (and controversial) Jesuit priest, Onesimus Lacouture, and its furtherance by Fathers John J. Hugo and Pacifique Roy who were close to the Catholic Workers.

I was also much taken by Merriman's chapters on "friends"—by which she meant not only the saints whom Day admired but also her own strong capacity for human friendship. In 1929, Day, living in Hollywood, wrote that women needed a "community, a group, an exchange with others...we women especially are the victims of the long loneliness." Those words, I think, reflected both her sympathy for the suffragettes with whom she worked in her youth and her much later irritation with Peter Maurin (whom she deeply loved) who spoke of communities of laymen under a priest with a seemingly blissful indifference to women in this scheme of things.

It was one of the great privileges of my life to have met Dorothy Day just a few

Searching for Christ: The Spirituality of Dorothy Day, *by Brigid O'Shea Merriman, O.S.F., University of Notre Dame, $29.95, 360 pp.*

BOSTON COLLEGE

"Be informed, formed and transformed..."
Thomas Groome

Study at the Institute

- DISCOVER BOSTON AND HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND
- FLEXIBLE PROGRAM OPTIONS FOR STUDY
- ENRICHING LITURGICAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES
- CONTINUING EDUCATION, SABBATICAL PROGRAM AND DEGREE OPTIONS
- M.A., M.A./M.S.W., AND M.Ed., C.A.E.S. AND PH.D IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
- GENEROUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND GRADUATE STUDENT HOUSING

SESSION ONE: June 26-July 7

Bernard Cooke	Ancient and Contemporary Christologies
Thomas Groome	Sharing Faith in Religious Education
Katheryn Pfisterer Darr	Introduction to Old Testament
Donald Dietrich	Vatican II and the Roots of Modern Catholicism
Doris Donnelly	Contemporary Sacramental Theology: What are the Theologians Saying?
Shawn Copeland	Foundations in Theology

SESSION TWO: July 10-July 21

Gustavo Gutierrez	Liberation Theology (July 10-14)
Jamie Phelps	Theology and Process of Inculturation (July 17-21)
John Coleman	Religion & Society: Discipleship and Citizenship
Michael St. Clair	Family Systems: A Theory for Pastoral Practice
Maria Harris	Teaching, Ministry, and The Religious Imagination
J. Cheryl Exum	Women and the Bible

SPECIAL ONE WEEK COURSES: July 10-July 21

Michael Himes	Theology of Ministry: Forming Faith Communities (July 10-14) Ministry and Spirituality (July 17-21)
Workshops:	Toinette Eugene, Catherine Vincie, Kathleen Gallivan, and James Shaughnessey

SESSION THREE: July 24-August 4

Barbara Bowe	The Gospel of John
Richard Gula	Foundations in Moral Theology
Merle Jordan	Pastoral Psychology and Theology
Margaret Kelleher	Christian Ritual and Transformation
Claire Lowery	Theology and Pastoral Practice
John Staudenmaier	The Media and Culture

Boston College
For information, contact:
Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry
Department R
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167
800-487-1167 or 617-552-8440
SUMMER 1995

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

months before she died. My recollection of her, wearing a plain dress and sensible shoes, frail yet passionate, stays with me. It has been made more luminous by this well-written, extensively researched, and illuminating work. I highly recommend it.

The interesting thesis of Torjesen's book is not difficult to summarize. In

When Women Were Priests: Women's Leadership in the Early Church and the Scandal of Their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity, *by Karen Jo Torjesen, HarperCollins, $22, 278 pp.*

Greco-Roman culture the social structure of society was such that the masculine sphere was oriented to public life while that of the feminine concerned itself with the domestic. This division was rigorously observed through custom, ideology, and law. For women to take an direct interest in the public sphere was a *shame* in the technical anthropological sense. Since early Christianity found its natural locus in the house church, it was possible for women to have leadership roles precisely because the "house church" was, in her words, an "interstitial space" in which "public" and "private" spheres were somewhat mingled. Since the early church was a kind of "domestic sphere" it was possible for Paul, for instance, to salute women who had clear leadership roles in the Pauline communities.

As the Christian church moved from the era of the house church to the public arena of the state-funded basilica (early in the fourth century), it became less possible for women to have leadership roles. To adopt such roles in public life was so culturally unacceptable that women doing so were considered "shameful." What happened in the fourth century, to use Torjesen's words, was a shift from ministry to governance in the sociopolitical sense of the term. Governance was the provenance of the male.

There is much of interest in the book, although in places the nexus between her reflections on pagan culture and the actual life of the early church is not always well spelled out. When Torjesen sticks close to her intended topic, she is persuasive. The last two chapters are the least satisfactory (added to flesh out the volume?), skimming over a millennium of history to link Augustine with medieval misogyny and then on to Luther (chapter 8) and a final brief chapter which deals, quite superficially, with feminine imagery for the divine.

This provocative work would have been better had the author spent more time systematically exploring her basic thesis. By the early second century we already see the emergence of a monarchical episcopate (reflected inchoately in the Pastorals) in some writers. What was the interplay between the shift from charismatic ministry to the institutionalization of charisma into office? Torjesen is well aware of this trend, and remarks on it here and there, but does not explore it in a systematic fashion. A rigorously historical examination of that issue would have enhanced a book which is, despite its somewhat diffuse character, very insightful.

Pope Gregory the Great (died 604) identified Mary of Magdala, always cited as the leader of the women who ministered to Jesus in his lifetime, with the penitent woman who bathed the feet of Jesus (Luke 7) and Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus. Because of Gregory's popularity and authority there arose in the medieval period an intense devotion to Mary Magdalene focusing on her status as a repentant sinner and a contemplative. She

Mary Magdalene: Myth and Metaphor, *by Susan Haskins, Harcourt Brace, $27.95, 518 pp.*

was often depicted in art (Haskins is quite good on the development of her iconography), many churches were raised in her honor, houses for penitent women were dedicated to her as well as colleges at both Oxford and Cambridge. Even the film *The Last Temptation of Christ* (and, earlier, *Jesus Christ Superstar*) relied on the myth of Mary Magdalene as a woman converted from a life of wantonness to what the mystic Julian of Norwich called a "Lover of Jesus."

Alas, this outpouring of imaginative homage is based on a misreading of the Gospel, as Origen, writing centuries before Gregory, already understood. Accordingly, the Eastern church honors Mary of Magdalene as one of the *myrrophores* (ointment-bearing women) without the theme of penitent sinner. Furthermore, modern feminist scholarship has rehabilitated her claim to the title of "apostle" since she is the earliest recorded witness to the Resurrection. Even the reformed Catholic liturgical calendar has struck the notation "penitent" from her feast day. Her role in the early Jesus movement has received careful, and persuasive, attention from scholars like Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza.

This is all spelled out in ample detail in Haskins's book as she traces the somewhat convoluted story of the rise of the cult of Mary Magdalene from its gospel origins down to the present day. The book is amply illustrated and the art history sections are fascinating. Haskins makes the intelligent point that various ages have added to or reshaped the image of Mary Magdalene according to the reigning *Zeitgeist*. By turns, she is the converted sinner, the contemplative friend of God, or the weeper (the very word "maudlin" is a relic of that latter emphasis). In our century there has been a belletristic and dramatic interest in the putative erotic relationship between Mary and Jesus.

I must note, however, that this book is less successful when the author moves from art history to theology and church history. Marred with trivial errors of fact, a reliance on tendentious sources as well as citations almost always culled from secondary sources (and, thus, mostly unusable), the author trumpets her prejudices with wearying regularity. What we end up with is a work containing fascinating patches of intellectual history combined with an intermittent attempt to exorcise the ghosts of the author's convent school education. The end result is a very uneven and quite irritating book.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Josephus (A.D. ?37-?100), born of a priestly family in Jerusalem, was a desert dweller (with the Essenes?) for three years, and afterwards in Rome an ambassador on behalf of the Jews. After being captured by Vespasian at the siege of Jotopata in Palestine, he was spared by the emperor to serve as his interpreter. Josephus was an eyewitness (and Roman spokesman) at the horrendous siege of Jerusalem which ended in the destruction of the temple, the slaughter of its citizens, and the Roman triumph commemorated by the Arch of Titus (Vespasian's son) with its bas relief depicting Roman soldiers carrying the temple menorah in triumph.

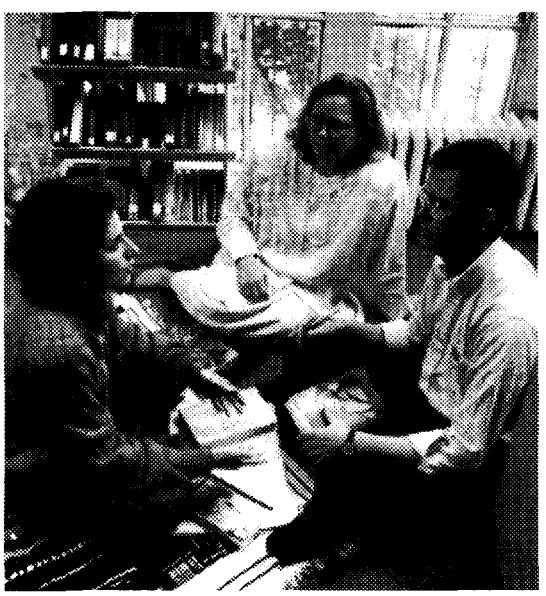
From those eyewitness experiences Josephus wrote his *Jewish Wars* in Aramaic, quickly followed by a Greek translation, which is a valuable (but not always reliable) resource despite Josephus's skittishness about laying blame at the Roman doorstep. Josephus had good reason for caution since he lived in an era of psychotic emperors.

As an apologia for his natal faith and culture, Josephus, in the final decade of his life, wrote *The Antiquities of the Jews*, tracing the history of the Jews from the creation narrative in Genesis to the beginnings of the Jewish wars. It is in that work where one finds the famous passage in book xvii (An interpolation? Much ink has been spilled about that issue) about Jesus.

Flavius Josephus, *by Mireille Hadas-Lebel, Macmillan, $20, 269 pp.*

Based on those works, as well as a somewhat prolix autobiography and a polemical work (*Contra Apionem*), Hadas-Lebel, a Parisian scholar, gives us both a biography of this fascinating figure and a critical study. Ably translated from the French, the book is an accessible, straightforward, and well-informed study. The final chapters reflect on the reception of Josephus (the early Patristic writers used him for apologetic reasons; the Jewish tradition tended to ignore him) in Western thought as well as more recent literary attempts to come to terms with his complex, and not always lovable, persona.

Anyone who has stood near the Western ("Wailing") wall in Jerusalem, or climbed the serpentine path leading to Masada near the Dead Sea to see the extraordinary ruins of the last Jewish refuge against the Romans, should have Josephus in the back of their minds. If the thick volumes of Josephus prove too daunting to begin with, interested readers might make a beginning with this well-tempered study. They will find the text readable and the end maps useful. The absence of even a short bibliography (one must construct it from the rather scanty notes to the individual chapters) is unfortunate. □



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Ph.D. programs in Christian Ethics and New Testament & Early Christianity

Two programs for full-time students which draw on the distinctive resources of the Roman Catholic theological tradition.

- Financial assistance available.
- Application deadline February 1st.

For more information, write to:

Director of Graduate Programs
Department of Theology
Loyola University Chicago
6525 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60626
312-508-2353

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 2)

As for Carlin's analysis, it has a lot in common with the inside-the-Beltway mentality that he criticizes. Like the Washington pundits, Carlin places issues in the context of what wins/loses. There was a time when Carlin had the "vision thing" and put issues—not only one—in terms of social justice. Unfortunately, I did not see much evidence of vision in his column.

EDMOND C. SMITH

'Boys' not censored

Ottawa, Ontario

To the Editors: In response to a letter by Barbara Blaine [Correspondence, September 9] with respect to Richard Alleva's review of *The Boys of Saint Vincent,* I wish to advise you and your readers that no efforts were made by church leaders to keep the film from being broadcast. In fact, the injunction to prevent the broadcast of the film was obtained by defense counsel who were representing individuals facing criminal charges whose most fundamental rights were at stake. Both the Ontario Court (General Division) and the Ontario Court of Appeal agreed that the right to a fair trial takes precedence over the broadcast, for profit, of a film.

Indeed, during the relevant period, church leaders of the Archdiocese of Toronto, the Archdiocese of Ottawa, and the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ottawa were helping to set up a reconciliation model agreement which could potentially provide the victims of abuse with, among other things, in excess of $27 million in assistance.

It is important for your readers to know that not only were church leaders *not* involved in trying to keep *The Boys of Saint Vincent* from being broadcast but that they were actually working, and continue to work, to help actual victims of abuse.

I was one of the lawyers who helped in the negotiations which brought about this model reconciliation agreement set up to help victims by avoiding the revictimization of litigation.

JOHN P. NELLIGAN

The big story syndrome

North Adams, Mass.

To the Editors: In his essay, "Ushering in the Age of the Laity" [September 9], Kenneth L. Woodward contends that "most official Catholic journalism is fourth rate and there is simply no reason for all these mediocre diocesan newspapers to exist."

In the past I have written as a free-lance correspondent for the *Florida Catholic*, the *Vermont Catholic Tribune*, and the Trenton, N.J., *Monitor* on such (insignificant?) topics as ministry to Haitian immigrants in central Florida, the retirement of a much-loved priest, the impact of the Challenger disaster one year after the fact on parochial school children and others who saw it happen, the response of the church to substance abuse, programs to aid families caring around the clock for disabled loved ones, a public school lunch program in southern Vermont.

Most of these stories would not be covered in the secular press. The five diocesan papers I am familiar with—all good to excellent—frequently feature stories like these, as well as intelligent commentary from a Catholic perspective. Stories unfavorable to the church are not ignored.

Either Woodward has not read many diocesan papers, or he suffers from a condition I have observed both in big media types and in hotshot young reporters: "big story syndrome."

Young reporters with the syndrome don't see real news in anything less than catching the mayor with his hand in the till. Covering the local parade is not news; appointment of a new minister by the town's largest congregation is *definitely* not news. Big media types see yet another "Pope Is Out of Touch with American Catholics" story as real journalism.

I want to advance a radical notion: The much-loved-priest-retires story (in the Catholic or secular press) probably matters more to more people, and is more likely to be clipped and saved. It's specific and immediate, and reaches them where they live. Tip O'Neill had it right when he said, "All politics is local." After eight years writing for Catholic papers and writing for and editing small secular weeklies, I'm even more convinced that all journalism is local.

Woodward is wrong when he contends that "the national media is our public square." A public square for whom? Does the average, unspectacular believer, priest, volunteer, or unchurched person have any input into what adorns this national public square? Do they get any recognition in it?

Early in his essay, Woodward writes in a light tone, "Have you ever noticed that the usher at every Mass is always the same person? All over the world, in every church where I've ever attended Mass, it's always the same guy."

No, it's not always the same guy. It's many different men and women—each, no doubt, with a story to tell—a story you're likely to find only in the diocesan newspaper.

MARK E. RONDEAU

Needed: More, not less talk about sexuality

Flushing, N.Y.

To the Editors: Though *Commonweal* has published much significant material on aspects of sexual morality, it occurs to me that some quite personal reflections on my early married years, and about the maturation process that occurred once I distanced myself from *Humanae vitae*, will present a perspective not seen in your pages to date. No doubt some of what I want to say will raise eyebrows, but my purpose is rather to raise questions—questions that, I think, others share but which are not much discussed in public in a Catholic context.

Not for me any nostalgic reminiscing about the twenty-sixth anniversary of the encyclical, even though for the first twenty years of my marriage I could have been its poster child. A 1950 product of a Catholic women's college, I lived by its rules. Paul Murray has written at length ["The Power of *Humanae vitae*," July 15] about the satisfaction of natural family planning. In my case, it was *natural* and produced a *family*, but there was no *planning* involved, at least no successful planning. Though we were college graduates and chronologically adults, we remained children; using no "artificial" protection, we abandoned ourselves to conjugal pleasure when we weren't too tired, not so much as an expression of affection but as a relief from tension, a marital duty, a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

way to keep peace. As happened with so many other women whose biological cycles were less than regular, we produced eight new lives in twelve years.

We lived, I suppose, by an "anticontraceptive" mentality. Today I find the much-maligned "contraceptive morality" a more considered, a more moral setting in which to decide to have a child, or indeed to celebrate love. Others have so argued in these pages. I would go further. Without in any sense affirming sex without rules, I believe the current popular acceptance of premarital sex for committed or all-but-committed partners makes possible a more natural and realistic setting in which to explore and express their growing love, to plan for the future, and to experience their relationship as it evolves into a union of hopes and desires which they will solemnize in marriage.

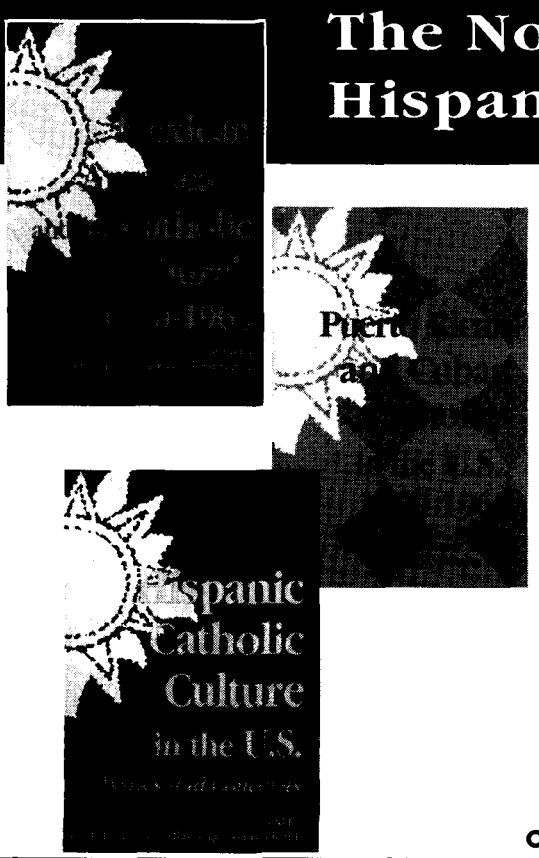
By contrast, we were denied any sexual pleasure prior to marriage. Even after marriage, bound as we were by the strictures of *Humanae vitae*, we were still haunted by its misreading of marital union, with consequent problems of frigidity and premature ejaculation. We never had time to perfect our sexual compatibility; eight pregnancies in twelve years does limit energy and time to devote to lovemaking *per se*.

Yes, the contraceptive mentality can be abused to selfish and superficial ends. But the anticontraceptive mentality has its downside as well. The self-righteousness of the couple who use their burgeoning family as evidence of their devotion to God and each other, though they have never negotiated a relationship of mutuality and shared goals, is shallow. It is, I suggest, the reason for so many broken marriages among these couples. Encountering the siren song of individual freedom of the sixties and seventies, many of them, having felt cheated by the constraints of their upbringing, opted for freedom from those earlier choices. Our children were exhibiting a thirst for freedom which included travel, experimenting with drugs and sex, defying authority and protesting the war, seeking out new rituals and relationships, hungry for community. Some of us recognized a similar hunger in ourselves, even knowing the disasters and near-disasters that so many in the next generation were experiencing.

For me the search continues. There was a time when I would identify myself at a meeting as "the mother of eight." Today, as profoundly rich as I feel for having given birth to all these fascinating adults, I would no longer describe myself in those terms. The definition of self to which I have devoted the past twenty-some years, ever since the partner of my younger, more certain married years departed for his own freedom, is constantly evolving. But there is continuity; throughout these years I have been questioning how, as a Catholic woman and a feminist, I can resolve for myself these issues of love and sex, relationship, the quest for community, a need for celebration, an occasional Eucharist, a groping desire to live the Beatitudes more deeply.

There is a man in my life now. I am a healthy and vigorous sixty-five-year-old. Four years ago I met a widower at a party given by mutual friends. His married life had differed greatly from mine in that he and his wife, out of deference to a medical problem of hers, elected not to have

The Notre Dame History of Hispanic Catholics in the U.S.



The first comprehensive three-volume history of Hispanic Catholics in the United States

Volume 1
Mexican Americans and the Catholic Church, 1900-1965
Edited by Jay P. Dolan and Gilberto M. Hinojosa $29.95 cloth

Volume 2
Puerto Rican and Cuban Catholics in the U.S., 1900-1965
Edited by Jay P. Dolan and Jaime R. Vidal $24.95 cloth

Volume 3
Hispanic Catholic Culture in the U.S.: Issues and Concerns
Edited by Jay P. Dolan and Allan Figueroa Deck., S.J. $32.95 cloth

At bookstores or call (800) 621-2736 (VISA or MasterCard accepted):
University of Notre Dame Press
Chicago Distribution Center, 11030 S. Langley, Chicago, IL 60628

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

children. Their life was each other. Her loss ten years ago was devastating to him.

It is instructive for me to ponder their relationship. They had good jobs and, having lived through the Depression, were skilled at saving money. He was as involved as she in cooking and household chores; they shared an interest in boating. Although he had been brought up as a Catholic, indeed an altar boy, he never looked back as he abandoned his practice of going to weekly Mass, along with those restrictions on birth control that would have threatened his wife's health.

He finds my preoccupation with religion interesting but somewhat obsessive. After his wife died, I think he did return to Mass—"for her," he would say.

But as we began to spend more and more time together, our occasional visits to Mass have usually been to the community I choose, where the homilies are thoughtful and a sense of sacred space and time is created by the setting, the reverence, and the music.

But do I have a right to be there? To present myself at the altar for Communion? The sexual rigidities still confound me. What is the nature of our relationship, the sexual nature of two older adults, he in his late seventies? We have a great relationship. We live together more than half the time in one of our two houses. We share meals and hobbies, sailing and traveling, projects and quarrels. We share a bed and give each other tenderness and pleasure.

But we do not commit, and, for me, something is lacking. Is this only for now, as long as we are both healthy? Shouldn't we be discussing what lies ahead? He shies away from the word "love"; only his wife of forty years deserves his love. He will not speak of death except to state that he will be buried with her. Although he would deny that he loves me, he enjoys me, honors me, has fun with me, and I think cares for me deeply. But I need to speak of last things, and of promises to share them. It is possible that I will be the first to die, but given our age differences it's more likely that he will encounter death first; I want to be there to talk it through and to care for him. It is the last great mystery of our lives. To be unwilling to embrace that future is to fail to be totally present.

So, even at our ages, the crucial ingredients in the relationship are the openness, the promise "till death," and, yes, the unitive value of our physical being-together. The church has nothing helpful to say about these irregular unions which by virtue of age, gender, infertility, or illness are not capable of procreation. By Vatican standards they do not exist or are merely tolerated. Although Sidney Callahan has opened up the discussion with her remarks about same-sex marriage ["Why I Changed My Mind," April 22], much more talk and writing should be devoted to the potential of sexual intimacy for achieving the "two in one flesh" ideal of Genesis, without the exclusive and tendentious focus on reproduction.

We need to go beyond the open letter addressed to Pope John Paul II by Catholics Speak Out, which forthrightly declares, based on the lived experience of millions of Catholics, that the Vatican's opposition to contraception is wrong. Now let us attempt to define commitment, love, union, so that the focus of our attention is no longer solely on reproduction but on the beauty and goodness of sexual intimacy.

HELEN FITZGERALD

Gardening in Clay

Reflections on AIDS

RONALD O. VALDISERRI

"A physician at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [responds to] the death of his twin brother . . . of HIV-related disease. . . . These 26 brief, well-crafted essays . . . [are] provocative and poignant."—*Library Journal*

"You cannot but be moved by this book. While HIV is its bill of fare, it is glorious food for the soul."—David E. Rogers, M.D., Vice Chair of the National Commission on AIDS

"Valdiserri has written a moving book that everyone should read."—William J. Freeman, Executive Director, National Association of People with AIDS

$16.95 cloth At bookstores or call 607-277-2211 (credit card orders only)

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

Sage House • 512 East State Street • Ithaca NY 14850

Deep-down things

Wickliffe, Ohio

To the Editors: The season was right for the presentation of the free-verse piece, "Out of the Dark" by Dixie Partridge [October 7]. This lyrical celebration of the holy and the mysterious in nature was hauntingly beautiful in mood and astutely executed.

Sylvan exploration should mildly startle both grown-ups and children with the complexity and ultimate incomprehensibility of living things. It's currently fashionable to extol ecology as a formal science; yet how seldom do most urban and suburban folk pause and really contemplate such "things that thrive under darkness,/stirrings that draw toward light..."?

"Nought may endure but Mutability," sang Shelley long ago ["Mutability," stanza 4]. I must concur with the contemporary poet that "Our wholeness depends too/on what we've forgotten."

WILLIAM DAUENHAUER

Is voting for real?

Seattle, Wash.

To the Editors: Father Thomas Landy is right to be concerned about the distaste for political campaigning shown by the townspeople during the Fourth of July parade ["Politics on Parade," September 9]. But I wonder if that distaste might be rooted in something else: a sense among the people for the difference between technically representative and truly representative government. Is it possible that the parade watchers can esteem the ideals of the Declaration of Independence without believing for a moment that the mere act of casting a ballot constitutes representative government in any meaningful sense? Is it possible that politics in America is dead because there are no longer any words to express the issues a genuinely represented community might concern itself with?

To the extent any of these questions can be answered "Yes," campaigners for office are as out of place at a Fourth of July parade as professional wrestlers at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Olympics. Personally, I found myself sympathetic with the parade watchers. At some point, I think we have to consider seriously whether we are any longer a democratic country. And I think Father Landy may have missed much of what was happening there. It may have been the emperor, not the hypothetical female streaker, marching "bare-ass naked down the street."

MARK J. NIELSEN

Jobs for the hungry

Aberdeen, Wash.

To the Editors: In the opening line of "Complexities of Community" [September 9], columnist Liz Leibold McCloskey writes: "The biblical mandate to feed the hungry sounds so simple." Well, in some cases feeding the hungry *is* simple—as simple as providing people with work.

My parish serves a daily meal to the hungry in our small, rural, chronically depressed community. We are noted as victims of the spotted owl and as the home town of the late rock star Kurt Cobain. Many of the town's hungry are being fed through my church's soup kitchen, but it's my opinion that the parish serves the most expensive meal in town, because it costs each customer nothing less than his or her human dignity to eat there. Too often, I'm afraid, the one serving the soup is there to justify his or her own goodness, and treats the one receiving the soup as an object of charity instead of as a brother or sister in Christ.

Maybe it's pleasing to our souls to serve at the soup kitchen. It's like nailing boards on our houses in heaven. But by God, this used to be timber country. With the spotted owl safe and the forests and mills closed, we certainly can't make our boards out of wood any more, or, for that matter, pay for our own meals. When we could, we at least had our human dignity.

STEVE BLOMBERG

Last word on abortion?

Alexandria, Va.

To the Editors: Sadly for me and for many other "Catholics," as well as other non-Catholic Christians and other religious and spiritual people of good will, the hierarchy of the Catholic church and the editors of *Commonweal* continue to be obsessed with abortion. I believe most "right-to-lifers" are well intentioned. However, I feel compelled to have one last word about this subject, which sometimes seems to overshadow all the other sins and moral issues of the day. I offer a hypothesis: If an "idol" is something that is blindly or obsessively adored; something that preoccupies much of one's time, attention, and energy, is a major focus of one's consciousness, and that something is not God; then, perhaps, for persons who view the fetus this way, the fetus has become their idol. This possibility surely is worth contemplating.

TONY DiSTEFANO

Obeying the Spirit

Winston-Salem, N.C.

To the Editors: In his letter, "Misled by the Spirit?" [Correspondence, October 7], Bernard Beronio asks: "If the ordination of women is not clearly shown by either Scripture or apostolic tradition, then what other authority does the church have for adopting it?"

The church's authority for doing just that is clear in Matthew 16:19: "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The church has not only the authority but the obligation to ordain sufficient numbers of priests to fulfill its mandate to "Go forth and preach the good news to all the world" (Matthew 28:19).

If too few men respond to the call, and competent, dedicated women are willing to serve, how can the church continue to deny the salvific message to millions of people because of patriarchal myopia?

CARROLL C. ESTES

CLASSIFIED

RATES: 90¢ per word; 12 words minimum. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information call 212-732-0800 or write COMMONWEAL Classified, 15 Dutch St., Room 502, NYC 10038-3760.

Ministry Program

Vocational discernment for priesthood and/or religious life, lay ministry (men/women). Seeking theological degrees, sabbaticals/renewals for clergy, religious, laity? **Mater Dei Institute**, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99202-1849. 1-800-633-2252, ext. 380. Financial help available.

Boston College Faculty Position in Religious Education

The Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry and the Theology Department at Boston College announce a tenure-track position in **Religious Education** at the Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor level. Candidates must have a special area of competence related to the discipline of religious education and its particular articulation within the Catholic tradition, as well as its relation to other religious traditions. Demonstrated excellence in teaching and research is also required. Responsibilities include teaching graduate courses in religious education and undergraduate theology courses, advisement of doctoral and master's students, and committee membership. The ability to work as a team member of the faculty is important for this position, as is the capacity to conduct various forms of continuing education for professional religious educators and ministers in the local Catholic community. Ph.D. or Ed.D. required. Review of applications will begin on **December 16, 1994**, and continue until the position is filled. Candidates should send a letter of application, a *curriculum vitae*, and three letters of recommendation to Professor Donald Dietrich, Chairperson, Department of Theology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167-3806. EOE/AA.

Foreign Language Courses

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE, SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL, BOOK/CASSETTE COURSES. 91 languages in all. Free catalog from Audio-Forum, Dept. 162, Guilford, CT 06437. 1(800) 345-8501.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cinéma-vérité

MARK MORELLI

I liked it when the movie theater was the place to see movies. I went enthusiastically, even if the movie was mediocre. It was good to get out. In *Annie Hall*, Diane Keaton thinks it's great to watch movies in a home screening room (the mansion of the producer, played by Paul Simon). But Woody Allen disagrees. He says it isn't the same if you don't "make the effort" of going out to the theater.

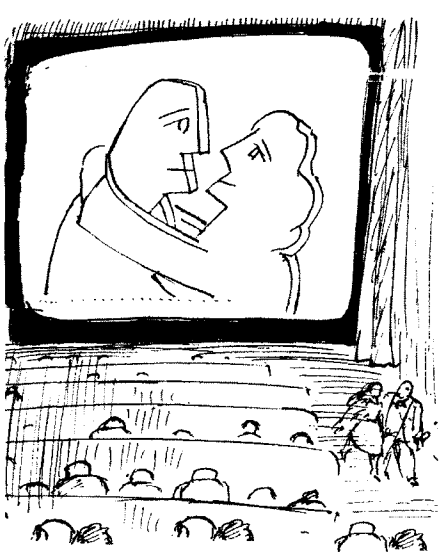
Now we have VCRs. For a measly dollar, I can see a movie in my house without combing my hair or putting on shoes. If the movie falls short of phenomenal, I walk out of the room indifferently. Worse, if I find the movie phenomenal, I'm still indifferent, scratching my belly at the fridge. There's no thrill of "making the effort" and meeting the artist halfway. I don't exit onto a sidewalk. There are no bright lights or drinks afterward, or the chance of running into an old friend in the lobby. (For a few years running I'd bump into a mysterious guy in a trenchcoat in the lobby after viewing foreign films. We'd launch into discussion about the film. I never knew his name.) Watching movies at home has become like the fifth Apollo moonwalk—blasé.

It took us three days to watch *JFK*, because we paused to finish laundry, answer the phone, feed the baby, throw in some more laundry, hacking at the film's continuity. I only listened to *What About Bob?* but later told people I saw it, which is like claiming to be well-read after reading only the headlines. I hated *Heathers* because I thought it was too much of everything: horror story, after-school special, black comedy, romance. While my wife tried to watch it, I wouldn't shut up with my dime-store criticism. In the theater, I wouldn't have said a word. I wouldn't have been so full of myself.

As a teen movie buff in the early seventies, I scoured *TV Guide* for old films. Loud car salesmen in big bow ties couldn't deter me from fighting sleep to see Boris Karloff, Lionel Barrymore, Clark Gable, and Abbott & Costello. These films often aired in the middle of the night, and where I now set my VCR, then I set my alarm. Yawning, rubbing my eyes, I watched the movies. I made the effort.

I'd also rise at 6:30 on Saturday mornings to watch a film series of classic comedies that were edited to one hour. The choppy editing didn't bother me. I was thrilled that I happened to be there to see them. I met Laurel & Hardy, Wheeler & Woolsey, the Marx Brothers, Red Skelton, and a sharper, hilarious Bob Hope I'd not seen on his TV specials. Not because I "rented" them at my convenience, but because our paths crossed. Who knew then, highlighting the *TV Guide* or waiting for a film to arrive at our local theater, that I'd have the choice of *thousands* of films, and hate it. Thousands is too much, like a mile-long buffet line when all I want is a club sandwich.

You should see us at our local video store: I want to see an old Jerry Lewis, but my wife is in front of *Beaches*. I'm looking at the Marx Brothers, but she sniffs,



"Guy stuff." I'm in the mood for a comedy when she's in the mood for a warm drama. She's in the mood for a comedy when I'm in the mood for a foreign film. I'm always, she's never, in the mood for a documentary.

We usually settle for a Hitchcock. You can't miss with Hitchcock. But Hitchcocks, like the sands of time, are running out.

One time we ambled indecisively from rack to rack. The longer we stayed, reading box blurbs to each other, the more of a chore it became. We spent an hour trying to decide how to spend the next two hours. Then I looked out the window into the plaza parking lot.

"Look," I said. A burly man in an overcoat turned up his collar and forged through the falling snow toward his car, the lonely Impala at the far end of the lot.

"He's slipping," my wife said.

"I hope he makes it," I said.

He slipped and slid, looking silly but at least keeping his balance until only ten feet separated him and his car. "Almost...," I said. But he fell, spinning on his bottom like Donald O'Connor.

"Ow!"

"Think he's hurt?" asked my wife.

With the dogged determination of Oliver Hardy, he shook the snow from his coat, tugged his hat, and with salvaged dignity strode the rest of the way to his car.

"He made it!" we cheered.

The snow could've melted off his hot neck. He revved his engine. The headlights, like great spotlights, illuminated the thick, ornate snowflakes, which scattered in the cold wind like chorus girls in a Busby Berkeley spectacular.

"Wow," I said.

"Beautiful," said my wife.

"Coffee?" I suggested.

"Sure."

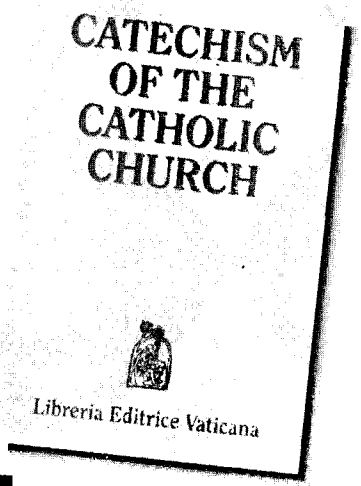
We left empty-handed. □

Mark Morelli is a free-lance writer from River Edge, New Jersey.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"A great symphony in Four Movements... a sure and certain standard for the teaching of faith... a precious, splendid, profound, and timely gift for all."

Pope John Paul II



For 980 million people,

this could be the most important book to be published in the last 400 years.

The new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- #1 Religion Bestseller! 2 million in print!
- A major religious statement at a time of searching moral crisis and bewildering social change.
- A major publishing event — a book debated by pundits for its cultural impact, and read by millions for its inspirational power.

816 pages, 6" x 9"/Hardcover #32655 $29.95/Paperback #32656 $19.95

Also available in Spanish! Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica

662 pages, 6" x 9" /Paperback only, #71300 $19.95

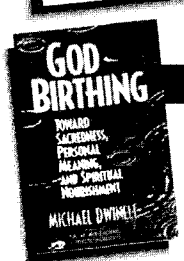
Reinhabiting the Earth

Biblical Perspectives and Eco-Spiritual Reflections

Mary Lou Van Rossum; Foreword by Thomas Berry

The most important spiritual topic of the Nineties at last draws on Scripture itself for a powerful testimony to environmentally-conscious living.

Triumph/Hardcover/#R5790 $18.95

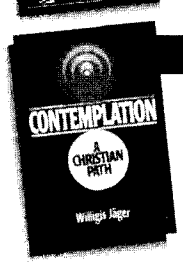


God-Birthing

Michael Dwinell

Inspired by Meister Eckhart, this powerfully creative vision portrays God as being born to us and in us in our experience of the sacred.

Triumph/Hardcover/#R3835 $16.95



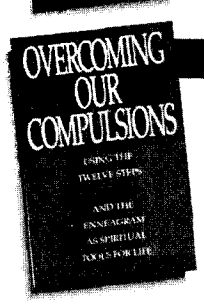
Contemplation

A Christian Path

Willigis Jäger

A fresh appreciation of the spiritual realities shared by East and West, drawn together by contemporary psychological insights.

Triumph/Paperback/#R3345 $9.95



Overcoming Our Compulsions

Using the Twelve Steps and the Enneagram as Spiritual Tools for Life

Mary Mortz

For the first time you can bring together these two proven systems of spiritual transformation, and open up a new world of healing and enlightenment.

Triumph/Paperback/#R5450 $12.95

Companions in Consciousness

The Bible and the New Age Movement

Ronald Quillo

Triumph/Hardcover/#R3260 $18.95

The Ground We Share

Everyday Practice, Buddhist and Christian

Robert Aitken & David Steindl-Rast

Conversations edited by Nelson Foster

Triumph/Hardcover/#R3960 $17.95

On the Road to Emmaus

Stories of Faith, Doubt, and Change

Mark Collins

Liguori/Paperback/#54415 $6.95

The Revelation of Divine Love in Sixteen Showings

Made to Dame Julian of Norwich

Translated with a new Introduction by M.L. del Mastro

Triumph/Paperback/#R5875 $10.95

The largest Catechism co-publisher with 1 million copies!

LIGUORI/TRIUMPH

America's largest producer of Catholic publications

Order from your favorite bookseller or **PHONE TOLL-FREE:** 1-800-325-9521, Ext. 834. **FAX TOLL-FREE:** 1-800-325-9526, Attn. Dept. 834. **MAIL:** Liguori Publications, Box 834, Liguori, MO 63057-9999.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW CONTINUUM BOOKS

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza

JESUS: MIRIAM'S CHILD, SOPHIA'S PROPHET

Critical Issues in Feminist Christology

The long-awaited book on Jesus by the celebrated author of *In Memory of Her*. By assessing various Jesus traditions and interpretations as to whether they can engender liberating visions for today, the book seeks to challenge and transform masculine Christian identity-formations and exclusivist theological frameworks toward a vision of justice and well-being for all. *Winner of the 1994 Continuum Book Award.* $22.50

Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki

THE FALL TO VIOLENCE

Original Sin in Relational Theology

A re-evaluation of the nature of original sin based on our relations with each other. Suchocki argues that the condition of "original sin" is a rebellion, not against God, but against creation, and in this context, she offers a startlingly fresh interpretation of forgiveness. $18.95

Ann Kirkus Wetherilt

THAT THEY MAY BE MANY

Voices of Women, Echoes of God

"A poetic and challenging testimony to the coming of age of theologies articulated by women."—BEVERLY W. HARRISON
"Seeks a theological 'rainbow coalition' of women from all fields."—CARTER HEYWARD
$19.95

Scott McCormick, Jr.

BEHOLD THE MAN

Re-reading the Gospels, Re-humanizing Jesus

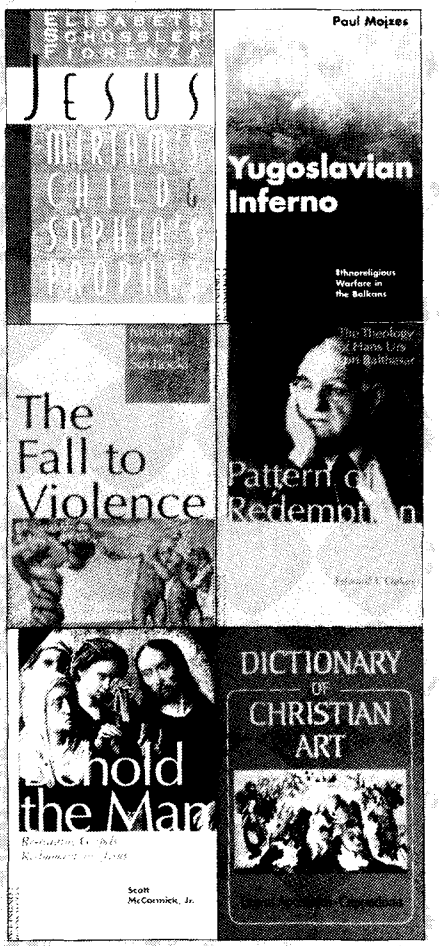
"Helps readers move from quite empty, often thoughtless beliefs to depth perceptions about Jesus, the Church, and human life."
—PAUL W. HOLLENBACH $19.95

Bernard McGinn, Editor

MEISTER ECKHART AND THE BEGUINE MYSTICS

Hadewijch of Brabant, Mechtild of Magdeburg, and Marguerite Porete

An illuminating exploration of the links between Meister Eckhart and the Beguine mystics of the late thirteenth century whose great work Eckhart received and assimilated.
$19.95



Diane Apostolos-Cappadona

DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN ART

With nearly 1,100 entries and 162 illustrations, this guide to art from the catacombs to the present is "a treasure-house of Christian culture, and one that is especially timely as a reminder of how faith has imaged itself through the centuries."
—MICHAEL PAUL GALLAGHER, Pontifical Council for Culture $39.50

Paul Mojzes

YUGOSLAVIAN INFERNO

Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans

"A clearly written, enormously informative and carefully balanced book, but it also has heart. Mojzes, a native son of this tragic region obviously feels its pain as his own. I commend this book to anyone who, like me, is angry, frustrated and puzzled about the Yugoslavian calamity."—HARVEY COX
$24.95

Hans Küng

INFALLIBLE?

An Unresolved Enquiry

Preface by Herbert Haag

A new, expanded edition of the book that ignited the greatest theological debate since the Second Vatican Council. A stirring treatment of an issue that is more urgent today than ever before. $19.95

Edward T. Oakes

PATTERN OF REDEMPTION

The Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar

"A work of rare intelligence, deep learning, and keen insight."—ROBERT L. WILKEN
"Conveys the flavor as well as the substance of Balthasar's many-faceted achievement."
—AVERY DULLES $29.95

William A. Meninger

LOVING SEARCH FOR GOD

Contemplative Prayer and *The Cloud of Unknowing*

With a foreword by Theophane the Monk

The spiritual treasures of *The Cloud of Unknowing* made fresh for modern men and women through sensitive commentary and exposition by William Meninger, monk, retreat master, and a leader of the Centering Prayer movement. $13.95

Karl-Josef Kuschel

LAUGHTER

A Theological Reflection

A fascinating discussion of laughter in Western biblical and philosophical traditions that praises laughter and condemns its demise at the hands of the church fathers and in the monastic tradition. $17.95

At your bookstore CONTINUUM CONTINUUM CONTINUUM or call 800-937-5557

The Continuum Publishing Group

Werner Mark Linz, Justus George Lawler, Frank Oveis, Gene Gollogly,
Ulla Schnell, Evander Lomke, Cynthia Eller, John Heidenry, Martin Rowe

370 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED